

# INDIANS *of the* PUEBLOS

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# INDIANS of the PUEBLOS

*A Story of Indian Life*

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## INTRODUCTION

THIS book is the fourth in the INDIAN LIFE SERIES by the Demings. It is a story of Indian life in a pueblo, or village, in New Mexico. The authors lived among these Red People for years and had a part in each of the events described. These events occurred many years ago, before the Pueblo Indians had greatly changed their ways.

Mr. Deming was then a young artist. He wished to paint pictures that would show the manners and customs of the old-time Indians. Every picture in this book was painted by Mr. Deming from sketches made while he lived in a pueblo. Boys and girls who visit museums will sometimes find larger pictures that Mr. Deming has made of some of these scenes.

Mrs. Deming, too, became familiar with the lives of the Pueblo Indian people, who were her friends and neighbors. The Indians taught her the meanings of the many feasts and dances that occupied a large part of their time. She also learned their ways of expressing thoughts. In a diary, she kept notes of what she learned about Indian life. With the aid of these notes she has here described what she saw and heard.

Young readers of this book will sometime study the history of our country. They will then learn that the Spaniards were the first white men to travel and to live in the Southwest. These men used words from their own language to name the things that they saw. To them, a village such as those in which these Indians lived was a *pueblo*. The square, or court, about which the Pueblo Indians built their homes was a *plaza*. The little animal that is elsewhere called a donkey was to the Spaniards a *burro*. The authors have used these and other significant Spanish names that are still used in our Southwest.

Each book in the INDIAN LIFE SERIES pictures the dominant traits of one of the three great types of Indians. LITTLE EAGLE very simply introduces the first-grade reader to Indian life through the experiences of an Indian baby's first childhood days. THE INDIANS IN WINTER CAMP, written simply enough for second-grade children, tells of the experiences of a slightly older boy who lived on the plains in a skin tepee. RED PEOPLE OF THE WOODED COUNTRY is a story of the adventures of two little Indian boys whose homes were birch-bark wigwams in the woodlands. It can be read with ease by third-grade children. INDIANS OF THE PUEBLOS is about the Indians of the Southwest, as described above. It can be read easily by fourth-grade children; but, like the other books of the series, it will also be read with interest and profit by children of higher grades. The readers of the INDIAN LIFE SERIES will acquire from the stories a knowledge of Indian customs, traditions, religion, and culture.

These stories have been prepared under the direction and supervision of Professor Milo B. Hillegas of Columbia University.

THE PUBLISHERS.

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*Washing Little Bird's Hair*

## THE TWIN WARRIORS LEAD THE WAY

Near the close of a hot, dry day an Indian family was gathered in a circle before the doorway of its home in the pueblo (pwěb'lō). Big Eagle, the father, stood leaning against a post, while near by on the low porch floor sat Singing Leaves, his wife. Little Bird, their baby boy, rested quietly in his mother's arms. Star, the older son, and White Cloud, his younger sister, sat beside each other on the hard-packed dirt in front of the porch.

All were looking at an old Indian, who sat on his heels in the center of the group. He was Tall Oak, the Storyteller, who was liked by everyone in the pueblo. Although his skin was wrinkled, his eyes were still clear and bright.

The family quietly waited for Tall Oak to speak, but the Storyteller was in no hurry to begin. He put some loose tobacco into a dried corn-husk and slowly rolled a cigarette.

Big Eagle silently brought the Storyteller a light. When the cigarette was well lighted, Tall



Oak carefully blew big puffs of white smoke toward the four corners of the earth, toward the Above People, and toward the Below People. Star and White Cloud knew that he blew the smoke as an offering of respect to the spirits. While the old Indian did this, Singing Leaves and her three children scarcely moved.

At last Tall Oak was ready. Laying his cigarette aside, he said, "I shall tell you of the coming of our people. The story is one that all our children should know."

Tall Oak was very serious, and so, too, were all his listeners. The two wide-eyed children moved close together. They listened carefully as the old man spoke.

"Many, many snows ago all the Red People lived with the Underneath People in the center of Mother Earth. Among these people were some who were good and some who were bad. So the Red People were not always happy. Finally a time came when the bad people killed so many of the good ones, it seemed that there might soon be no good people left.

"About that time the Above People sent two brave young warriors to help the good people of

the Underneath Land. These young warriors were twin sons of Father Sun and Mother Earth.

“To those who lived in the Land of Darkness, the Twin Warriors said, ‘Follow us. We will lead you into the light. We will take you to the Upper World. There you will see our Father, who will also become your Father.’

“Eagerly the Red People followed their two young leaders. They traveled for many days through a dark, narrow passageway. It was a long, hard journey. But the good people tried to keep cheerful and happy.

“The Above People were sorry for the travelers on the dark road; so they sent their own Delight Makers, or sacred clowns, to make the Red People laugh. These clowns made up the sacred Koshare (kō-shār') Society. It has always been the duty of this society to make people happy and cheerful. The Delight Makers did their best to make the Red People laugh and forget their hardships on the long journey.

“Finally the travelers reached the top of Mother Earth. As they came from the opening in the earth, they saw a beautiful spot of light in the dawn of the eastern sky.



*The Travelers' First Sight of Morning Star*

“‘Is that your Father?’ the wondering Red People asked.

“‘No,’ answered the Twin Warriors. ‘That is Morning Star, one of our Father’s messengers. Morning Star shines to tell the world of our Father’s coming. He warns the night clouds that they must hurry into their homes.’

“While the people who came from the Below World watched the east, they saw the darkness turn first to gray and then to red and yellow and gold. At last a big, bright eye rose over the eastern mountains.

“‘What is that?’ asked the surprised and frightened Red People.

“‘That is Father Sun,’ the Twin Warriors answered. ‘He is our Father, and he will be your Father, too.’

“The sun rose higher and higher, and his light grew brighter and brighter. At first the Red People closely covered their eyes and were afraid to look about them. But after they felt the warm, pleasant fingers of Father Sun, the Red Men knew he was a friend. So they uncovered their eyes. ‘Your Father and our Father is good,’ they told the Twin Warriors.



“Looking about them, the travelers saw many things which they had never seen before. They could not help being happy. There before them, they saw grass-covered lands and fertile fields. The Red People were sure that they could keep themselves from hunger in this new land of warmth and sunshine. They knew that they would be happier in a land filled with sunshine than in the Land of Darkness.”

Suddenly Tall Oak stopped speaking and looked at his silent listeners. He calmly relighted his cigarette. Then, when he saw Star and White Cloud move quietly, the old man turned to them and said:

“Among these good travelers were the Long-Ago People. From them have come all our people. Our Father is Father Sun, and our Mother is Mother Earth. The Red People have found them both good. That is why we love them. That is why we honor them.”

The Storyteller was very much in earnest. Once more he blew whiffs of smoke about him. Then he again took up his story.

“The happy Red People soon found that they had much to learn. Even in a land of sunshine,

they had to work if they wanted plenty of food and clothing. But they were willing to work hard, and they were eager to learn.

“The Above People with the help of Mother Nature taught the Red People how to use the many things Mother Earth has to offer. They learned how to plant the fields and how to care for the crops.

“This is what they learned about their four good friends, the Rain Makers: The Rain Maker of the North is yellow. During the winter moons his color is reflected by the morning and evening light. The chill, wintry wind is his cold breath. The gray and the blue of the twilight reflect the color of the blue world, where the Rain Maker of the West lives. His moist breath often sends rain. The Red Rain Maker of the South lives in the home of heat and of fire. He usually sends dryness, but sometimes breathes drizzling rain. Because of the light-gray dawn, the Rain Maker of the East is white. In his breath is the frost that ripens the seeds and paints the leaves.

“The four Rain Makers live in the waters upon Mother Earth and in the Below World. They also live with the Cloud People. Their breath is the

mist, and their laughter is the pleasant ripple of the streams. The Rain Makers use as gateways from the Below World the springs which flow from Mother Earth.

“When the first bears awake from their long winter sleep, the great Thunder Spirit growls and sends rain in his breath. Slowly but surely the cold strength of the Yellow Rain Maker is broken. Finally he rushes angrily back to his home in the North. The summer moons begin. Mother Earth awakes and drinks deeply of the water that is sent by the Blue Rain Maker. Soon the Red Rain Maker brings heat, and all the Plant People, big and little, begin to grow and whisper to one another. Then there is much work to do until the White Rain Maker sings Mother Earth to sleep again during the winter moons.

“The Red People also learned to work with the Cloud People, who brought the Rain Makers. But sometimes the Rain Makers fell asleep, and the Cloud People forgot to come. Then the Rain Makers had to be awakened by prayers.

“Slowly the Red People learned how to do many things for themselves. But always they needed the help of Mother Earth and Father Sun.



“After every sleep Father Sun came to help. Every day he traveled across the sky upon the long trail which leads to the mountaintops in the west. The hard journey made Father Sun very tired. When he came to its end, he always stopped to rest for a moment. Then he dropped into a big, beautiful lake. Through this lake he entered the Land of Darkness, where the Underneath People live. Even now Father Sun never forgets to come to the Red People.”

Thus Tall Oak ended his story. Star and White Cloud had followed it closely. Big Eagle and Singing Leaves had also listened with interest even though they had both heard the story many times. They always liked to have the old Storyteller visit them.

Slowly rising, the old man drew his blanket about him and prepared to leave. But before he was lost in the darkness of the plaza (plä'zà), he again reminded Star and White Cloud, “You must not forget how your people came to this happy land. Also, you must never forget to thank Mother Earth and Father Sun.”

## THE SLEEPY RAIN MAKERS

Some days later Big Eagle and his family were again gathered about the doorway of their home. Like other families in the pueblo, they were watching the shadows lengthen as the sun traveled farther and farther toward the west.

Star and White Cloud watched the sky turn from turquoise (tûr'koiz) to crimson and gold. The children were thinking of what the Story-teller had said. It seemed to them that Father Sun did stop to rest on the distant mountain.

As his rays lightly touched the topmost leaves of the cottonwood tree in the plaza, the children thought that he was kissing the tree good night. On the walls of the houses, he painted bright spots of glowing color. His golden fingers changed the whole pueblo into a dreamland.

In this land of sunshine the houses were usually made of adobe (à-dō'bĭ), or clay bricks baked by the sun. With no space between them, the flat-roofed houses were built around a large, open square, or plaza.

Above the first row of houses another row was built. Although the pueblo, or village, in which Star lived had only two rows of houses, some of the neighboring pueblos were seven stories high. On the plaza side each row was set back farther than the one beneath it so that the stories of houses looked like big stairways leading from the plaza to the sky. The people who lived in the top rows used ladders to reach their homes. If there was danger, they pulled up the ladders.

The outside walls of the pueblo were solid. Only at one corner was there an opening in the walls, through which the Indians could enter or leave the plaza. This opening had a strong, heavy gate, which could be closed in time of danger. The pueblo had been built like a fort so that the Pueblo Indians could protect themselves against their enemies. The worst of these were the Apaches (ă-păch'ĕz), the Navahos (năv'ă-hōz), and the Comanches (kō-măn'chĕz).

Some of the houses had open front porches. It was upon such a porch that Big Eagle and his family now sat. While the children watched the sunlight, the mother and father talked about the crops. Both were worried.



"If the Rain Makers do not visit us soon, we shall go hungry during the cold moons," said Big Eagle.

"Yes," began Singing Leaves slowly. "Mother Earth is hot and dry. All the Plant People are thirsty. Unless the Black Cloud People open their doors, we shall not have enough food for our little ones."

"And there will be no wild cotton to use for clothing to keep us warm," said the worried father.

Star and White Cloud were listening now. Young as they were, they knew what would happen if no rain fell in time to save the crops.

"The grama (grä'mà) grass near the coulees (kōō'līs) is drying up. It is hard for the burros (bûr'ōz) to get enough to eat," broke in Star.

"The river is almost dry," said White Cloud. "Only a little muddy water is left."

"You are right," her father said. "The many daughter ditches are already empty. The river is so low that it cannot fill the mother ditches."

Singing Leaves spoke up sadly, "We must ask the Sky People to help us. They must send the Black Cloud People with the Rain Makers."



*Big Eagle and His Family*

To these Pueblo Indians who lived in the dry, sandy Southwest, rain was one of the most important things in the world. Their food, their clothing, and their lives depended upon the water which the Sky People sent them. If the grass and shrubs died, all the wild animals went elsewhere to live. Without meat to eat and without skins to wear, the Indians would have a very hard time. If their crops failed completely, they might even starve.

For generations these Pueblo Indians had been a peaceful farming people. Had their warlike neighbors, the Apaches, the Navahos, and the Comanches, let them alone, they would gladly have spent their days in peace and quiet. They asked for nothing more than a chance to make a hard-earned living from their fields.

Of all the Indians whom the white man found in this country, none were better farmers than the Pueblo Indians. None worked harder nor produced better crops. Near the bank of the river on a fertile plain not far from the pueblo in which Big Eagle lived, stretched well-tended fields. There Big Eagle and the other Indians cultivated their fields of grain, vegetables, and melons.



Yet farming was not easy for these Indians of the hot, dry lands. No matter how hard they worked, their crops sometimes failed, usually for lack of water. Often not enough rain fell to keep their plants alive. Or when it did fall, it did not come at the right time. For these reasons the Pueblo Indians had learned another way of bringing water to their planted fields.

Around each field the Indians dug a deep ditch. They called this ditch a mother ditch. They joined it to the river and let it fill with water. Smaller ditches, known as daughter ditches, were dug across each field and were joined at each end to the mother ditch. When the Rain Makers forgot to come, the Indians turned the water from the mother ditches into the daughter ditches. Then the smaller ditches gave the thirsty plants a drink.

But now the Cloud People had not opened their doors for so long that even the river was nearly dry. Very little water was left in the mother ditches. The young corn and wheat plants hung their heads as they begged for a drink. Mother Earth was sorry, but, unless the Rain Makers helped, she could do nothing. Everyone





*Workers in the Fields*

in the pueblo wanted the Cloud People to come. Each day found the Indians sending up silent prayers to the Sky People.

Like Big Eagle and his family, most of the other families were gathered about their doorways. They seemed to be waiting for something to happen as they silently watched Father Sun going down in the western sky.

## IN THE KIVA

Suddenly the silence which had fallen upon the pueblo was broken by the deep boom of a tom-tom. The sound came from the roof of the kiva (kē'vā), or council house. Everyone knew what the voice of the tom-tom said. The Cacique (kā-sēk'), or religious chief, had sent his messenger to call the councilmen to a meeting in the kiva. It was for this call that all the Indians had been waiting.

Rising from the porch, Big Eagle wrapped his blanket about him. Then, telling his family good night, he joined the other men who were walking toward the kiva. All knew why the Cacique had called the council together. It was to decide upon the best way to get the sleepy Rain Makers to come out of their sky homes and send a drink to thirsty Mother Earth.

The kiva was the most important building in the pueblo. It was there that the Cacique went when he wanted to fast and pray alone. It was there that all who took part in the sacred and

often secret ceremonies of the tribe gathered. And it was there that the councilmen decided all matters important to the tribe.

In some ways the flat-roofed kiva was built much like the other houses in the pueblo. Its main roof beams reached from one side to the other, and the ends stuck out through the adobe walls. Inside the kiva wooden posts held up these big beams, across which smaller logs had been laid. The logs had been covered with brush, and this, in turn, had been coated with a thick blanket of wet clay, which the hot sun had baked hard.

In other ways the kiva was quite different from the houses. It was only a one-story building and was partly underground. The adobe walls were built up about three feet above the flat roof. These walls were broken only where an adobe stairway led to the plaza beneath.

Near the middle of the roof was an opening about four feet wide and six feet long. This was the only way into the single room beneath. This opening served as a doorway, a window, and a chimney. From the opening a ladder, extending some ten or twelve feet above the roof, pointed always to the North Star.



When Big Eagle reached the kiva, he walked up the stairway to the roof. Then he went down the ladder into the kiva. He found himself in a large, dimly-lighted room.

The floor was made of stones carefully set in adobe. Light came through the large hole in the roof. Almost directly under this opening was a pit that was used as a fireplace. Here, during the summer moons, a small fire gave light. During the winter moons a larger fire gave heat and light.

On one side of the room another smaller pit had been dug in the kiva floor. This opening was covered by a board, in the center of which was a small, round hole. This hole, which was now carefully closed by a tight, wooden plug, was called the sipapu (sē'pä-pōō). It was supposed to be the opening in Mother Earth through which the Twin Warriors had led the good Red People from the Underneath World.

The Indians believed that the Underneath spirits could enter the kiva through the sipapu. At all their important meetings the councilmen wanted these spirits to be present. So whenever the council met, the plug was removed from the hole in the board.



*The Crier*

On the walls of the kiva were shelves upon which small, carved images of the Indian gods had been placed. On these shelves were also kept the masks and other sacred things which were used in the dances and ceremonies.

As each man came down the ladder into the kiva, he quietly took his place in the half circle of men who sat on the floor around two sides of the fireplace. The other half was kept open for the religious leader, the Cacique. When they sat down, the councilmen did not speak, but waited silently for the Cacique to open the meeting.

The Cacique was a wise man, who had been picked for his high office when he was still a boy. He had been carefully trained for his important duties, for he led the pueblo in its religion and government. He would hold his office as long as he lived. Everyone in the village felt sure that the Cacique received his wisdom from the gods. It was not strange then that his people always listened carefully to whatever he said.

When the last man had taken his place, the Cacique rose and silently removed the plug from the sipapu. Next he lighted a cigarette and slowly blew puffs of smoke as a prayer to the spirits.



Then, looking about the circle, he said in deep, earnest tones:

“The Rain Makers are asleep. The Black Cloud People do not open their doors. The ditches are nearly empty. Our crops need water and may soon die of thirst. We must pray to the sleepy Rain Makers. We must dance to awaken them so that they will visit us soon.”

Then the Cacique sat down, and each man was given a chance to tell what he thought should be done. Many of the councilmen spoke. All agreed that it was necessary to awaken the sleeping Rain Makers. Everyone was in favor of the dance as a prayer to the Sky People.

Long after the men had gone to the kiva, the Indian families sat near their doorways. All were awaiting news from the meeting. The long shadows slowly deepened. Father Sun went to rest behind the distant mountains. Yet in the clear desert air there was still light enough to see.

Big Eagle's family eagerly watched the top of the ladder which pointed up from the kiva opening. But at last Little Bird fell fast asleep. When Singing Leaves saw that Little Bird's eyes were tightly closed, she called softly to Star and White

Cloud. The little family went into its home to rest.

Soon other families did the same. Finally everyone in the village, except the councilmen in the kiva, was at rest. Not until long after Father Sun had set did shadowy figures flit from the kiva across the plaza and into the houses. Not until then had the council decided how to awaken their sleepy helpers.

## THE PRAYER TO THE RAIN MAKERS

The next morning Singing Leaves awoke very early, as usual. As she rose from her bed of blankets and skins, she looked about the dimly-lighted room, where her husband and the children lay asleep on the floor.

Walking quietly through the doorway into the morning dusk of the plaza, Singing Leaves looked toward the east. She saw Morning Star shining brightly. Father Sun had not yet come from the Underneath Land, but she knew from his messenger that he would soon appear.

On all four sides of the plaza, smoke was lazily curling from pottery chimney tops. To Singing Leaves, this meant that other women of the pueblo were also awake and ready to begin their day's work.

She went back into the house to light her own fire in the big adobe fireplace so that she could prepare the morning meal. When the fire was lighted, she awakened Big Eagle.

Wanting to know what kind of day to expect,

Big Eagle, too, stepped out into the plaza. He looked past the top of the mesa (mā'sä), which overshadowed the pueblo to the east. There Father Sun was already painting the sky with fingers of light; so Big Eagle made his offering of corn meal as a prayer.

Nowhere in the sky did Big Eagle see the Cloud People that he had hoped to find. The air was hot and still. Not even a breeze disturbed the white smoke as it left the chimneys. In a straight line it rose toward the sky above. This, Big Eagle knew, was the message of a clear day. He knew, too, that the Rain Makers still slept.

Just after Father Sun rose above the eastern mountaintops, a crier climbed the stairway to the roof of the kiva. First he, too, offered up a prayer to the rising sun. Then, after beating his tom-tom to awaken the sleepy ones, he shouted loudly, "The Rain Makers are asleep. The Cloud People do not come. Our corn and our wheat plants are thirsty: The river is low. Even the daughter ditches are stopping their work. We must awaken the sleepy Cloud People. We must pray to the Rain Makers. Come to the kiva for the dance to the Rain Makers!"



Star and White Cloud had been awakened by the crier. As they ate the morning meal, the members of Big Eagle's family talked about the coming dance. The children's black eyes sparkled, for all the young Indians liked to watch the dancing in the plaza. After the meal was over, Singing Leaves and White Cloud quickly finished the housework.

Then, while the little girl stood as still as she could, Singing Leaves, with a gaily-colored blanket, tied Little Bird to White Cloud's back. Although she was not very old, White Cloud liked to take care of her little brother. She liked to hear him laugh and chatter. She knew that he, like most Indian babies, did not cry very often.

Now that the baby was tightly fastened to White Cloud's back, Singing Leaves dressed for the dance. Like all the other women who would take part, she wore her usual knee-length dress. It was made of a single piece of cloth which was brought up under the left arm and fastened over the right shoulder. Her feet and legs she left bare. She combed her long, coal-black hair and let it hang free down her back.

From a shelf she lifted down her beautiful

headdress. It was made of wood and stood at least eighteen inches high. Carved with sacred cloud symbols and painted bright green, it was the headdress Pueblo Indian women had always worn in the sacred dance to the Rain Makers.

Around her neck Singing Leaves hung a beautiful necklace made of shells and large turquoise beads. Next she painted a bright red spot over each cheekbone. Then, after taking a branch of sacred juniper (jōō'nĭ-pēr) in each hand, she was ready to go to the kiva.

Big Eagle had long been dressed for the dance. On top of his head he had fastened a small twig of sacred juniper. Like Singing Leaves, he, too, had a shell and turquoise necklace. But his necklace fitted closely around his neck. He wore no shirt, for the upper part of his body was painted.

From his waist hung a short dance skirt woven from wild cotton and embroidered in bright colors. To the back of this skirt was fastened a bushy dance tail made of fox skin.

Unlike Singing Leaves, Big Eagle wore deer-skin moccasins (mők'ä-sĭns). In his left hand he carried a juniper branch. In his right hand he held a gourd (gōrd) rattle.

When Singing Leaves was dressed, she and her husband went to the kiva, where the other dancers were already gathering. All were very quiet as they waited for the dance to begin.

While the older people who were to make the prayer dance were meeting at the kiva, the children gathered in groups at the edge of the plaza. Although they were still too young to dance with their parents, they were much interested in everything that happened.

White Cloud joined a group of little girls, who also carried babies on their backs. They did not seem to mind their burdens but ran and played as usual. A Pueblo Indian girl seldom played with dolls. Perhaps she found it more interesting to care for real babies, who could crow and laugh.

At last the deep voice of a tom-tom came from within the kiva. Soon the children saw the chanters, some of the older men of the pueblo, coming out from the kiva and down the stairway which led to the plaza. Leading them was an Indian with a drum. As he reached the ground, the drummer again beat his big tom-tom. The drum had been made by stretching rawhide across each end of a hollow cottonwood log. The sides of the



drum had been painted with bright red and yellow colors. But even more interesting to the children than the gay colors was the deep, regular boom that came from the tom-tom as the drummer struck it with his big, skin-covered drumstick.

The chanters gathered closely around the drummer. First they began to sing softly, then more and more loudly. As they chanted their weird songs, their feet and arms kept time to the deep voice of the tom-tom.

Behind the chanters came the dancers, led by three men. The center man, wearing yellow leggings, carried a bright-colored blanket fastened to a long pole. At the top of the pole were three eagle feathers, and below the blanket hung a beautiful, shiny fox skin.

Following the leaders came the double lines of dancers. On the left side were the women, wearing headdresses like that of Singing Leaves; on the right side were the men, all of whom were dressed much like Big Eagle.

Up and down the plaza they danced. Their gourds and their juniper branches beat time to the singing of the chanters and the booming of the tom-tom.



As the children watched the dancers, they hoped that the Cloud People would see the dance and hear the prayers of their parents. Although they were young, the children knew how hungry they would be if the Cloud People did not open their doors and send the Rain Makers.

White Cloud seldom let her eyes wander from her mother and father. She was very proud of her parents as they kept time to the music.

"How fine the dancers look," she said to a little friend who was standing near her. "Don't you wish you could dance with them?"

"Yes," answered the other girl. "And I should like to wear such pretty beads and such a beautiful green headdress as Mother has."

While the men and women danced, they were closely followed by the little boys. Star and some of his friends carried out a dance of their own. Although they could not dance with the grown people, they wanted to help, too. They tried to do as the men did. If their fathers did not dance fast enough, the boys put extra steps into their own dance. They laughed at the fun they were having.

Up and down moved the chanters and dancers.



*The Dance to the Rain Makers*

Not once did any of the grown people smile during their solemn prayer to the Rain Makers. If they grew tired from their long dance, they did not show that they did.

Finally, when the sun was straight overhead, the dancing and chanting stopped. All sat down to a feast which had been prepared by the older women and the little girls. After everyone had eaten and rested, the prayer dance was begun once more to the boom of the tom-tom. Not until Father Sun paused to rest on the mountain peak in the west did the Indians stop moving up and down the plaza.

All the dancers were very tired, but they did not care about that. The people of the pueblo were satisfied that they had done their best to awaken the sleeping Rain Makers. As the tired Indians went to bed that night, they silently hoped that the Cloud People had heard the prayer and would soon open their doors to give Mother Earth a good drink.

## THE RAIN MAKERS' VISIT

When the sun peeped over the mesa the next morning, not a cloud was in the sky. Still the Pueblo Indians were sure that if the Cloud People had heard the prayer, they would send the Rain Makers to help. If the Cloud People had not been listening and did not send the Rain Makers soon, the dancers and chanters would dance another day to awaken their sleepy helpers.

The Indians did not give up hope. Perhaps the Cloud People were holding a council of their own. If so, they would not hurry, for no one hurried in this "land of tomorrow." Perhaps the Rain Makers were busy, helping another pueblo. Or perhaps the Sky People did not know how much they were needed.

As soon as Father Sun had started to travel across the sky, Big Eagle and Star, with the other men and boys, went to work in the fields.

Although they believed the Rain Makers would come, the Indians had learned to waste not one drop of moisture. Before turning any of the wa-



ter into the daughter ditches, the men loosened the dirt around the plants. For this purpose the Pueblo Indians used a dibble (dib''l), or digging stick. This long stick, ending in a knife-shaped, wooden paddle, helped to break open the hard, dry earth.

For a time the men and boys worked steadily. They wanted to help Mother Earth as much as they could. By and by Star grew tired. He felt the blazing heat of the hot sun; so he stopped to rest. As he stood in the field, leaning on his dibble, he looked around at the sky as far as he could see. Above him it was clear; no Cloud People could be seen there. But far, far away where the sky seemed to meet Mother Earth, he thought he saw some of the Cloud People. They looked very small and thin. They seemed to be drifting slowly toward him. He was not sure; so he called to Big Eagle, who was working near him.

“Father, do you see the Cloud People over there above the hills?”

“Yes,” answered Big Eagle. “I see them, too. You have good eyes, my boy.”

Star smiled proudly at his father's praise. By this time all the Indians had stopped their work.

They were anxiously watching the faraway Cloud People.

"I hope they are not dust clouds," said Big Eagle to a friend near by.

"So do I," the friend replied. "Dust clouds are bad. They bring storms of sand."

"Let us hope that the Cloud People find our pueblo and do not open their doors before they reach us," said another worker.

Just then the Indians felt a gentle southeast breeze. All were glad it came from that direction. Had the breeze been from the west, it would have frightened the Cloud People away. As the wind grew stronger, it gave courage to the tired men and boys. Sure now that the Rain Makers had heard their prayers and were at last coming to help them, the Indians again set to work.

More and more Black Cloud People came out from their hiding places behind the mountain. The Indians could now see that the Wind People were bringing the black clouds over the fields. The sky became darker and darker. Soon a thick blanket hid Father Sun. The air became cooler and cooler. Before long the Thunder Bird began to call in the distance.

The southeast wind grew stronger. At last it became so strong that it blew open the doors of the Cloud People's home. Little by little, the Rain Makers came out from behind the dark clouds. They slowly tipped their buckets, and drops of water began to fall to Mother Earth. As they fell from the sky, they puffed up the dry dust in the fields.

When the first gentle raindrops began to fall, the Indians started for the pueblo. All were quiet as they walked home. They were sending silent prayers of thanks to their helpers in the sky. As the men and boys neared the gate, the little children, dancing and laughing for joy, came running out to welcome the fieldworkers home.

Mother Earth was also grateful to the Sky People. As she caught the gentle raindrops in her lap, she sent out her fragrant breath in thanks. And when the thirsty corn and wheat plants drank the cool water, they lifted their slender heads and smiled their thanks to the Rain Makers and to the Above People.

At first the scattered drops only dimpled the little pools in the river. But it was not long before the Cloud People opened wide their doors, and a



heavy rain began to fall. Soon the daughter ditches were filled; then the mother ditches slowly overflowed. In a short time the river began rising. Before night it was full from bank to bank. As the rain kept falling, Mother Earth drank more and more deeply.

Long after the Indians had reached the pueblo, the rain continued to fall. Then, late in the day, the northwest wind began to blow. The Cloud People closed their doors and carried the Rain Makers away. Perhaps they went to answer the prayers of another pueblo that needed help.

Shortly after the rainfall was over, a large number of women and children started toward the swimming hole in the river. On their heads the women and some of the older girls carried large pottery water jars. Many of the mothers carried their babies. In the group was Singing Leaves, with Little Bird tied to her back. White Cloud walked beside her mother.

Star, with the other boys, ran ahead. So eager were they for a swim that they pulled off their clothes as they ran. The young lads wanted to jump into the water as soon as they reached the bank of the river.



Splash! Splash! Splash! One after another the boys dived into the river. At the first touch of the cold water, they gasped for breath. But they soon forgot the chill as they swam about like wild ducklings. As they splashed one another and played games in the water, they squealed for joy.

Soon the women and girls reached the river. They waded out into the water and washed their skirts. When their clothing was clean, the mothers took the babies from their backs and dipped them chin-deep into the river. As the fat little babies splashed in the water, they, too, chuckled and laughed with glee.

By and by the older women were ready to go back to the pueblo. But they did not make the children leave the river. Instead, the mothers stood knee-deep in the cool water and watched closely so that no harm should come to the fearless, happy children.

After a time, the little swimmers had had enough. While the children dressed, the women went upstream and filled their water jars with the clear, sparkling water that was bubbling along the riverbank.



*The Dip*

Each lifted her full water jar to the top of her head. Then, walking slowly so that no water would spill, the party started homeward. Star, feeling fresh and clean, ran on ahead. He did not wait for his mother and his sister, both of whom were carrying heavy jars of water.

When Star reached the pueblo, he noticed that Tall Oak had already gathered around him a small group of boys. Star quickly joined the group, for he knew that the old man was about to tell a story. Nodding his head to Star, Tall Oak began his tale.

“Today you saw the Sky People send the Rain Makers to help us. The White Cloud People do not bring the Rain Makers. They are only the beautiful cloud flowers behind which the Rain People play. It is the Black Cloud People who carry the Rain Makers.

“Before the Rain Makers can come to us, they must have water. To get it, they go to the hollow tree that lives near the sacred springs beyond the mountains. The tree is so tall that its top reaches up to the Cloud People. The Rain People climb down inside the tree trunk and fill their big jars with the sacred water from the springs. They carry the jars back through the tree trunk. Then



they creep behind the Black Cloud People. When the Sky People open their doors, the Rain Makers sprinkle the water down upon Mother Earth.

“Sometimes the Rain Makers are lazy. They do not like to carry the water up the hollow tree trunk. So they sprinkle only a little water from their jars.

“Then the terrible Thunder Birds come out from their homes in the far mountains. The Thunder Birds are huge spirits with black wings and tails of solid rock. In their anger, they clash their wings, scream loudly, and make such a noise that they frighten the Rain Makers. Then the Rain People quickly empty their jars. They hurry about as they carry more and more water from the sacred springs. When the Thunder Birds think that Mother Earth is satisfied, they are quiet and go back to their rocky homes. Then the Rain Makers stop their work.

“While the Rain People are working, the bright flashes of light that you see are made by the magic arrows of the war gods. The flashes come when the gods shoot their arrows through the sky. The magic arrows are tipped with lightning stone. Sometimes the arrows of the war gods strike in



the mountains of Mother Earth. At those places we find the lightning stone, or flint, which we know is hard enough for arrowheads and knives.

“The next time that the Cloud People open their doors, you must not forget to look for the Thunder Birds and the arrows of the war gods,” concluded Tall Oak.

Pleased with the old man's story, the boys scampered home. They had learned much about the Rain Makers and would be sure to watch more closely when the Sky People came again.

That night when Father Sun paused above the western mountains for his usual last look, he saw a very happy pueblo. The air was washed clean and fresh. A sweet smell arose from the piñons (pē'nyōns) and the sagebrush. Mother Earth had taken a deep drink and was no longer thirsty. The river was rising, and the ditches were full. The Rain Makers had awakened and answered the Indians' prayers. Before eating the evening meal, every family had made an offering of corn meal to the gods.

## A TRIP TO THE WOODLANDS

One day, after the visit of the Rain Makers, Big Eagle and his family were sitting before the fireplace. They were eating their evening meal. A bowl of corn-meal stew and a large basket of bread stood near them.

As they finished the meal, Singing Leaves said, "Our bread is nearly gone; I shall soon have to bake. But before I can do that, I shall need more firewood. What we have will last only a little longer."

Big Eagle put his hand on Star's shoulder. "Tomorrow we must go into the woodlands, my son," he said.

Star did not smile, for he was disappointed. In the first place, he did not like to go for wood. Besides, he had planned to go hunting with some of his friends the next day. But the boy did not object. Instead, he tried to forget about the hunt. He knew that his mother needed wood for the big fireplace in which she cooked the family meals. Without wood to heat the large, smooth bread

stone in the fireplace, Singing Leaves could bake no more of her delicious corncakes that were as thin as tree leaves. Nor could she heat the round oven that stood in the plaza and was used for baking her family's bread. Star liked to eat and was especially fond of his mother's bread and corncakes. He knew that he must help his father bring a supply of wood or he could not have the food he liked.

To the Pueblo Indians, wood was a most important fuel. The branches from the cottonwood and aspen (ă's'pĕn) trees that grew near the village did not give much heat. To get their firewood, the Indians were sometimes forced to go a long distance. In the coulees and canyons (kăn'yŭns) of the mountains, piñon and scrub oak trees were to be found. So when fuel was needed, each family went to the woodlands after its own firewood.

That night Big Eagle and his family went to sleep early. No one wondered whether the next day would be clear or rainy. In this land of sunshine Father Sun smiled on the pueblos nearly every day.

Long before the sun came from his cave in



the east, Big Eagle and his family had eaten the morning meal. Star and his father wanted an early start for the long, hard trip.

As soon as Star had finished eating, he went to the big corral (kǒ-räl'), close to the pueblo. Here all the horses and burros were kept. Mounting his father's horse, Star soon rounded up his own little burro and Big Eagle's five pack burros. Then he quickly drove the animals to the door of his home, where his father was waiting.

Star slid from the horse's back and jumped upon his own little beast. Although he loved his little burro, Star could not help wishing that he had a horse of his own.

When Big Eagle mounted his horse and rode ahead toward the river, Star started the burros in single file along the trail after his father. To keep them from straying from the path or from eating along the way, Star stayed at the end of the line.

Big Eagle led the way straight to the ford, where they were to cross the river. As Star watched his father and the pack burros splash through the water, he saw that the river was much higher than usual. When it was his turn to cross,



he pulled his feet up so that his moccasins and deerskin leggings would not get wet. He knew that if the water touched his clothing, it would have to stay wet until Father Sun dried it.

After fording the river, Big Eagle rode across the sandy stretch, where a straight trail through the green-gray sagebrush soon brought the group to the foothills. Here the leader turned off upon a winding path which led into a narrow canyon with steep, rocky sides. Only here and there did the travelers see a lonely piñon or cedar tree brave enough to make its home among the barren, sandstone cliffs.

In the canyon there was much for Star to see. Everywhere the Wind People had been patiently cutting away at the rocky sides. At one place, he noticed what he believed to be a crooked path, now almost lost. It wound up from the canyon floor and along a steep cliff to the flat mesa above. He called to his father and pointed to the pathway.

“Father, that looks like an old path up the rocks.”

Big Eagle stopped his horse and waited for his son to catch up. He praised Star for seeing the dim pathway. Then, as they drove the burros up

the narrow canyon, Big Eagle told his son about the Long-Ago People.

“What I tell you was told to me by Tall Oak and Thundering Rock, his father. They learned the story from their fathers, who learned it from their fathers. Before the Wind People and the Rain Makers played with the path, it was a good one. It led to a pueblo on the mesa. The ruins of the houses are still there.”

“Does anyone live there now?” broke in Star.

“No,” answered Big Eagle. “No one has lived there for many, many snows. Only the Animal People and the Wind People play there now.”

“Have you ever seen the old pueblo, Father?” asked Star.

“Yes, my son. Once, with a hunting party, I climbed up the mesa. The houses looked much like our own. But the walls were mostly rock. There were no doors or windows, but only holes in the roofs. Perhaps the pueblo was built by our own Long-Ago People.”

“But why did they live on the mesa?” Star asked. “Our pueblo is in the valley.”

Big Eagle nodded to show that he liked Star’s

question. Then he said, "I shall tell you what the Storyteller told me.

"When our Long-Ago People came here, there were many bad people on Mother Earth. The bad ones were always trying to kill the good people. There was much fighting.

"Our First People found it better to live on the high mesas. The only way to get to the tops was by narrow paths like the one you saw. Brave warriors were kept at the upper ends of the paths. From there the warriors could see a long distance. It was not easy for other tribes to attack them.

"Life was hard for the people on the mesas. They had to climb down the long, rough paths whenever they wanted water. Sometimes, to help them, a Thunder Bird with his powerful beak dug big holes in the rocky tops of the mesas to hold the water that the Cloud People sent. The Animal People and the Wild Plant People gave the Red Men food.

"Later they learned to raise Plant People. They found that these grew best in the valleys, where it was not safe to be caught by an enemy. Yet the plants needed constant care. Our Long-Ago People did not know what to do.



“At last they decided it would be easier and better to live on the level ground. They knew they must be ready to fight at any time. But that did not frighten or stop them. Our brave people left their homes on the mesas and moved to the valleys. There they could be close to their fields and the water in the rivers. They built their pueblos so they could be easily defended in case of attack.

“That was when our pueblo was built,” ended Big Eagle as he stopped his horse long enough to make an offering of corn meal to the spirits of these Long-Ago People who had lived on the mesas.

Star wished that he and his father had time to follow the winding path, now claimed by the Wind People, the Rain People, and the mysterious past. Perhaps sometime he could come back to visit the pueblo on the mesa. As Big Eagle led the way along the trail, Star looked back at the faraway top of the canyon. He hoped to catch a glimpse of the old, old houses there.

As they rode on, Star saw more and more trees growing near the trail. At last he and his father reached a place where the canyon widened



into a little grassy opening. Here Big Eagle stopped and slid from his horse as a sign that this was the end of the journey.

Leaving the animals to feed and rest, the Indians set to work. Star picked up all the pieces of wood he could carry and took them back to the trail. His father gathered pieces which were too large for Star to carry. The smaller pieces were tied into neat bundles so that they could be easily packed on the backs of the burros.

Long before enough wood had been gathered, Star was tired. He decided that it was much more fun to go hunting with his father than it was to pick up wood. But the work had to be done; so Star did not stop to rest.

At last plenty of wood was piled by the trail. Star helped his father load the five pack burros, and the wood gatherers were ready to start for home. At the start Big Eagle led the way, but he soon joined his son at the end of the line.

The burros wanted to stop along the way to rest and to eat the tender green grass. But Star and his father drove the lazy beasts steadily along. They could not be very tired or hungry, for they had been resting or eating a long time.



GEW

*Bringing in the Wood*

The sun was casting long shadows before the burros were allowed to stop in the plaza. Singing Leaves and White Cloud helped unload the burros and pack the wood away.

Then Star drove the tired animals to the corral. For once, he did not stop to pet his own little burro. He was too tired and hungry. Besides, he was sure that his mother would have hot corn-cakes for the evening meal. Star liked these thin wafers better than any other bread. He almost ran back to the house, he was so eager to taste the cakes.

While he was eating his cakes, he had a hard time to keep awake. He was so tired that he forgot to tell White Cloud about the many wonderful things he had seen. He hoped that he and his father had brought enough wood to last a long, long time.



## BOYS WITH THE HEARTS OF MEN

The Blue Rain Maker of the West had come to live in the valley. His hot, moist breath helped the Plant People to grow big and strong. The men of the pueblo no longer needed to work every day in the fields but had time to do other things.

One morning just after Father Sun had started on his journey, Star saw a crier with his tom-tom coming down from the kiva roof.

"This is the day for boys," the messenger called out in a slow, deep voice as he walked through the plaza. "All boys who have been invited come to the kiva now."

Star's eyes shone brightly as he listened to this short message. He had long known that he would be called to the kiva. He knew, too, that it was not for fun that he and the other boys selected had been called. What they learned to-day would be a part of their training for manhood.

Among the Pueblo Indians every boy received two kinds of training. One was given by the Storyteller, who taught the legends and history



of the tribe. Star liked that training, but he liked even better the training given by the War Leader. From him, Star learned the habits, customs, and games of his tribe.

Every Pueblo Indian boy was taught to build a strong body. He was taught to hunt, to dance, and to take a worthy part in the games. He was also given much practice in running, for the Pueblo Indians were proud of their ability to run long distances without tiring.

Knowing that his father would take him to the kiva, Star ran home. Big Eagle was standing in the doorway, waiting for his son.

"Today the War Leader is going to watch the boys race in honor of Father Sun," his father said quietly. "You must show that you are swift and strong, my son."

"I shall do my best," Star said simply.

Star knew that he was a good runner, for he had often raced with the other boys. He hoped that sometime he would be able to run as fast as his father. That would not be easy, for Big Eagle was the best runner in the pueblo. He was known throughout the country for his running and had won many prizes and much honor for his village.

Soon every boy who had been invited had come to the kiva. The young Indians were eager to go into the council room. They were seldom invited there, and they wanted to hear what the War Leader had to say. When all the men and boys, including two little fellows of only five summers, had entered the kiva, the War Leader made an offering to the spirits.

“Today you must run to honor Father Sun. We shall see who have the strong hearts of men,” he said to the listening boys.

The Leader then chose two of the Indian fathers to act as leaders. He divided the boys into two groups and placed a leader at the head of each group. Star’s eyes sparkled with pride when he learned that his group was to be led by Big Eagle.

Each of the boys in Star’s group had a bright red spot painted on one cheek. This was to set him apart from the boys of the other group. When the young Indians had removed their leggings and moccasins, the War Leader, followed by the group leaders, climbed from the kiva. After them came the boys.

How slender, graceful, and proud the boys were as they walked across the plaza! They held



*The Crier Calling the Boys to the Kiva*



their heads high and looked straight ahead. Not one of them smiled, for all felt like true warriors. Each boy felt sure that he had the strong heart of a man.

The racecourse was in the street behind the plaza. The housetops and the sides of the street were lined with people. Everyone who was not taking part in the games was there. Singing Leaves and White Cloud hoped that Star would run faster than any other boy. They told Little Bird to watch his brother, for the time would come when he, too, must learn to run swiftly like his father and his brother.

The street had been carefully swept. Not one tiny pebble lay in the way of the runners' feet. Big Eagle stood at one end of the course. At the opposite end stood the other leader.

After the happy boys had marched the length of the course, they turned to face the War Leader, who had stopped halfway down the course. He offered a prayer to Father Sun, asking for the boys' success. Then half the boys of each group marched back to the other goal.

The Cacique stepped out from among the watchers. In his left hand he laid a pinch of



sacred corn meal, which he blew toward the sun. Every Indian stood with reverence as the Cacique asked Father Sun to bless the young runners that day.

The War Leader had already taken his place halfway between the two goals. He gave his tom-tom a sharp blow as a signal for the boys to get ready. Then he raised his right hand, in which he held a twig of sacred juniper.

Holding a like sprig of juniper, one boy from each side stood on the mark. Eagerly they watched the War Leader's hand. The moment he dropped it to his side, the two boys leaped forward like deer. Down the course they sped. Neither was able to gain on the other. They ran as if tied together, so closely were they matched.

As they passed the War Leader, he shook his branch of juniper at them and shouted words of praise. Neither boy took his eyes from the goal ahead. Each ran as fast as he could, while the crowd called to encourage the runners.

At the goal another boy from each group waited. Each was ready to begin the return run the instant that he received the sprig of juniper belonging to his group. As soon as the first pair

of runners reached the goal, the next pair was off like the wind. So the race continued until every boy had run.

Star was the last runner in his group. When he received the juniper, the boy with the unpainted cheek had already started on his way. Star ran as fast as he could, but at the halfway point he was still behind. Then he saw his father at the end of the course. Star wanted his father to be proud of him. Putting forth every effort, he gained one step, then two steps. He saw White Cloud waving to him, and he heard the encouragement of the watchers. At the last moment, he gave a great leap and touched the goal first. Big Eagle said nothing, but Star knew that his father was very proud of his swift young son.

After the relay race the War Leader beat his tom-tom. "Little Antelope (ăn'tê-lōp) and Running Deer, who have seen but five summers, are ready to run. They, too, want to prove that they have the hearts of men."

As the War Leader spoke, the two little boys who had come to the kiva stepped proudly up to the goal. When the War Leader gave the signal with his juniper twig, the little warriors were off.



*The Race*



The watchers, large and small, shouted encouragement. Puffing out their fat little cheeks, the runners gasped for breath. On they ran, neither letting the other get ahead. Everyone was pleased when Big Eagle decided that both the little boys had reached the goal at the same time.

Not until Father Sun was casting long shadows were the races over. Then the War Leader took the tired runners back to the kiva. While the boys were dressing, he praised them and told them that they had all proved that they had the hearts of men.

Star<sup>^</sup> was eager to go home. He knew that the Koshare Society was meeting later, and he was sure that his father would know which boys had been invited to join.

The Pueblo Indians were a very clannish people. Every person belonged to a clan, each of which had its own work to do. Every child, when born, belonged to the mother's clan.

One of the oldest and most important societies among the Pueblo Indians was the Koshare, the society of the sacred clowns and Delight Makers. It began when the Twin Warriors led the Long-Ago People from the Land of Darkness. Besides



making people happy, this society had charge of the rivers and streams.

Big Eagle had long been a member of the Koshare Society. Star thought that it was noble to make people happy. So he wanted to be asked to join his father's society.

Not until the family had finished eating did Big Eagle say, "Today you proved that you have a brave heart. My son, the Koshare Society has asked you to join it."

Star was so happy that he could not speak. At last he could dance with his father. Suddenly the beat of the tom-tom came to his ears. He heard the crier calling the Koshare members to the meeting.

Silently Big Eagle took Star into the kiva. One by one the other boys who had been invited to join came down the ladder. When they were all there, the head of the society made a prayer to the gods.

Then, turning to the boys, he said, "You must always be ready to help the Koshare Society. You must be strong and brave and good. You must always make people happy."

The leader then painted with bright colors



*Herding the Burros*

the crown, the chest, the palms, and the soles of each boy. Then a medicine woman, carrying a bowl of ashes, came forward. Dipping his fingers into the ashes, the leader touched the colored spots on the bodies of the boys.

Laying aside her bowl, the old woman crushed strips of cornhusks and tied them to the temple hair of each new member.

Then the leader said, "You must wear the paint and the cornhusks until you are told to take them off. Now that you belong to the Koshare Society, you must always be ready to do as you are told." The boys listened eagerly while the leader spoke.

As soon as the ceremony was over, Star hurried home. He wanted to show Singing Leaves and White Cloud his paint and cornhusks. The family praised him highly. Now that he was a Koshare like his father, he was a very proud and happy boy.

## HERDING THE BURROS

The Rain Moon, as the Pueblo Indians called July, was over. At this village it had been a happy moon. Since the Rain Makers had come to Mother Earth, the Plant People had grown thick and strong. There was now plenty of grass for the horses and burros.

The little boys in the pueblo took turns herding the village burros. These lazy little animals were always gentle and were usually easy to handle. One morning Star and three of his young friends were driving the herd of village burros to their feeding grounds across the river, where the thick grama grass grew. The boys did not try to hurry the little beasts, which never wanted to go fast.

Part of the time the boys rode the burros. At other times the herders jumped down and walked. The young Indians always looked for the hiding places of the small Animal People along the way. Once Star tried to catch a lizard sunning itself on a large rock. But the little creature was too swift



for him. It slipped under the rock so fast that he could not get it.

A little later a young cottontail rabbit ran across the trail and hid under a clump of sagebrush. The sharp eyes of the young herders soon caught sight of the cotton which rabbits carry for a tail. The little white spot stood out clearly against the green sagebrush. While his friends watched, Star crawled very quietly toward the little animal. He thought his rabbit friend was fast asleep. If Star could catch it, he would have a new pet. But the cottontail was not dreaming. When Star came too near, the rabbit made a sudden leap. Kicking the soft sand from under its slender hind legs, it quickly ran into its hole. The three other boys laughed at Star when the rabbit ran away.

Meanwhile, the village burros had strayed from the trail and were waiting under the small piñon trees. They liked to stop and sleep in the shade whenever they could. But when they knew they had to go on, they did not object. As soon as the boys came, the little herd started down the trail.

At last the boys reached the feeding grounds. They jumped from the backs of their burros.

Glad to be rid of their burdens, these lazy little fellows joined the herd which was eating the fresh green grass.

While the burros grazed, the boys played the touch game. All young Indians like to play this lively game, which the white children call tag. When the boys grew tired of the game, they played hide-and-go-seek. The thick clumps of sagebrush and the big rocks that lay all about made good hiding places.

While the boys played, they kept watching the grazing burros so that they would not wander up the deep canyons. These rough, rocky places, cut out by the Rain People, the Wind People, and the Sand People, were everywhere about the feeding grounds. Finally the burros had eaten enough. They wandered slowly about until they found a cool, shady spot; and there they stopped. Standing with their eyes closed, they seemed to be asleep. Except when they switched their tails or wiggled their long ears, they seldom moved.

The young herders knew that the lazy little animals would stay quiet for a long time. So Star said to the other boys, "Let us play the stone game for a while."

He was sure that his friends liked to play this game. Each boy found six small pebbles. He was careful to pick up only round stones. Such stones were not hard to find, for the sharp sand had worn most of the stones round and smooth as the wind had blown them across the country. After each boy had found his stones, Star dug a small hole in the ground. A short distance from the hole the four friends lay flat on their stomachs. Taking turns, the Indians threw the pebbles toward the hole. The boy who put the most pebbles into the hole won the game.

After playing several stone games, the boys became tired. The sun was hot, and they were warm from the games they had played. They lay down to rest in the shade of a scrubby pine tree. At first they talked; but soon, one after another, the boys fell fast asleep.

When Star came back from the land of dreams, he saw that the herd of burros was gone. Even his own faithful little animal was nowhere to be seen. Star always left a long rope trailing from his burro's neck. Now he wished that he had tied the rope to a tree before he fell asleep.

Quickly he awakened the other boys. They



jumped up at once; they were no longer tired. Hurriedly they looked about for tracks. That was the only way they could tell which way the animals had gone. The herders believed they knew where to look for the lost herd. The burros had been feeding at the mouth of a deep canyon which led high into the mountains. Several times the curious burros had tried to enter the deep, narrow pass, but the boys had always turned them back.

While the boys had slept, the wise little donkeys had known that they were not being watched. One of the boldest of the animals had made straight for the forbidden canyon. Burros like to stay together; and when one starts off, the others usually follow. So all the rest of the pueblo burros had followed the lead of the first one. Last of all had gone Star's pet, with the long rope trailing behind him.

When the little Indians looked, they found many burro tracks leading into the canyon. At first the boys were half afraid to go into the gloomy mountain pass. But Father Sun was already throwing shadows toward the east. And the herders knew that they must take the animals



safely back to the pueblo. Bravely Star followed the tracks his burro had left. Then the other boys followed. Slowly they entered the deep, silent canyon. They kept close together and made as little noise as possible. Eagerly they looked for the burros and hoped that they had not gone far up the canyon.

The trailing rope had kept Star's burro from going as fast as the other burros. Finally, the tracks showed that the little animal had lost the trail of the herd and had turned off into a side canyon. When the trailers reached the place where his burro had left the herd, Star knew that he would have to leave the other boys. He did not want to go on alone, but he knew that he must find his burro. The tracks led him up a steep hillside covered with piñons and quaking aspens. The pine branches cut Star with their pointed fingers and made him jump. He kept a close watch on all sides and wondered whether any of the big Wilderness People were around. He almost held his breath as he walked softly up the hill.

When Star suddenly saw the long, wiggly ears of his little pet among the trees, he was pleased.

He crept carefully toward the animal. He was afraid that the burro might run if it heard him coming. At last he grabbed the end of the trailing rope. Using the rope to pull himself over the rough ground, he ran up to the burro as fast as he could. He jumped on the little wanderer's back and made the lazy fellow run back down the side canyon. He dug his heels into the burro's sides to make him go faster. He tried to make himself believe that he was punishing his burro for having run away. He would not say, even to himself, that he was afraid and wanted to hurry out of the canyon as fast as he could.

The other boys had a harder task than Star. As they went farther up the canyon, it became very narrow. Only a small patch of blue sky could be seen far overhead. The thick trees which grew along the sides shut out the sunlight and made the canyon quite dusky. The boys wished many times that they had brought along some of the sacred corn meal. They would have felt safer if they had made a prayer before entering the gloomy canyon.

Suddenly they came to a sharp bend in the trail. Here the canyon widened into a grassy

opening, bright with sunlight. From a spring in the mountainside bubbled clear, cool water. To their joy, the boys saw the village herd drinking from the pool below the spring.

As soon as he could, each boy jumped upon the back of his own burro and helped to round up the rest. The young Indians were eager to go, for around the spring they saw the tracks that the Wilderness People had left when they had come to drink.

Suddenly the boys heard a loud scream. They knew that it was the call of the puma (pū'mā), the mighty hunter. Although the cry came from far up the mountain, the boys wanted to get out of the canyon as soon as possible. They shouted loudly and made the burros run. They hoped that the noise would frighten the Wilderness People and make them hide.

When they reached the mouth of the canyon, they found Star waiting there for them. Already Father Sun was close to the tops of the western mountains. Although the boys were tired, they did not stop to rest. The young Indians were still thinking of the mighty puma, somewhere behind them in the mountains. The boys hoped that



they were not being followed. On the way home they did not let the burros feed or rest.

When they reached the village corral, Father Sun was saying good night to the pueblo. The boys were happy when they were safe inside the plaza. For a long time they told no one else of their trip into the canyon. They did not want anyone to know how careless they had been. But they told one another that the next time they herded the animals they would be sure to watch the burros more carefully.



## THE BRIDGE OF THE KOSHARES

The Indians knew that Father Sun was fighting a great battle. Although the summer moons had come, the Yellow Rain Maker of the North was still trying to stay on the mountaintops. There, during the winter moons, he had piled up great heaps of snow and ice. Now he did not want to go back to his home in the cold North.

It was time for the Blue Rain Maker and the Red Rain Maker to live in the mountains as well as in the valleys. Father Sun wanted to help his friends; so he sent his hottest rays against the cold Spirit of the North. As the hot sunbeams played about him on the mountaintop, the Yellow Rain Maker became tired. Little by little his deep layers of snow and ice began to melt. At last the fierce Yellow Spirit fled farther north, and the Blue Rain Maker came to live in the mountains. Then the Indians were sure that Father Sun had won the battle.

One morning as the men and boys went to their work outside the pueblo, they noticed that

the river was rising. The melting snow and ice that the Yellow Rain Maker had left behind sent a rush of water down into the valley. At the same time the Cloud People opened their doors, and the Rain Makers made a long visit to the pueblo.

The river grew deeper and deeper. It touched Mother Earth high up on the banks. The water spirits were angry as they rushed along, rolling, twisting, and tumbling over one another. Before night the angry water spirits, sent by the Yellow Rain Maker, had carried away the footbridge that led from the pueblo to the other side of the river. Many of the Indians needed a bridge; so the councilmen were called to the kiva to plan a new one.

Early the next morning as Star was on his way to the corral, he saw a strange head rising from the river. The big head wore a huge mask that looked like a human face. But the large nose and the great bush of shaggy hair made Star know that it was a messenger of the good water spirits. He knew that it was not a real spirit but a crier from the Koshare Society, which was in charge of the rivers and bridges. Star was not surprised, for he also belonged to the Koshare Society. But he was sad when he remembered that it was his



*The Water Spirit*

turn to herd the burros. Now he would miss the fun in the pueblo.

Star followed the make-believe Water Spirit toward the village. As he ran back and forth through the plaza, the crier shouted, "The angry Yellow Rain Maker from the mountaintops has washed away our bridge. We must rebuild it. Come, all you men. Come down to the river."

Star knew that the Water Spirit would lead the men while they built the new bridge. Since it was the duty of the Koshare Society to make everyone happy, Star also knew that the Indians would make a picnic of the work. There would be fun for all. He did not want to drive the burros to the feeding grounds.

Calling to his father, who was standing in the plaza, he said, "May I not go to the river with you today? I can herd the burros some other day."

Big Eagle looked at his unhappy son. "No, my son," he said. "Everyone would like to go to the river. The other boys who must go with you would like to stay at home, too. But you must always be ready to do your duty. It is your turn to herd the burros; so you must go."

Star went slowly back to the corral. There



three of his young friends were waiting for him. None of them wanted to herd the burros that day, but each knew that he must do his share of the work of the pueblo.

As they were leaving the village on their little mounts, the sad boys forgot their troubles for a moment. They saw one of the sacred clowns of the Koshare Society pull a lazy man from his house. Then the poor herders remembered their work, and their feet and hearts grew heavy again. They almost had to drag themselves away from the pueblo and the funmaking which they knew would take place.

When Star looked back over his shoulder, he saw the sacred clowns as they pretended to herd the men who were going down to the river to build the bridge. The Delight Makers were driving the happy workers ahead of them as though they were burros. When a young man pretended to run away, one of the clowns would catch him and bring him back to the herd.

Star watched until the group of funmakers reached the river to begin its work and play. Then he kicked his heels into the sides of his little burro and caught up with the other boys.

He wished that the building of the bridge could be put off until he could help. But the work could not wait for him. Until the bridge was in place, there was no way for people on foot to cross the river.

The Pueblo Indians had their own way of building a bridge. After the men had gathered many straight cottonwood limbs, both large and small, they carried the wood to the bank of the river. There the smaller limbs were laid together in several groups of three. Then the limbs in each group were tied together a foot from one end with ropes of yucca (yŭk'ä) fibers.

After the cottonwood limbs had been neatly bundled, the men removed their leggings and moccasins. When the Water Spirit gave the command, the workers picked up the bundles and waded into the rushing water.

The angry river pushed and tugged at the legs of the Indians. The fierce water caught many of the brave warriors in its strong grip. It turned and tumbled them about until they could catch hold of something to help them to their feet again. The women and children on the bank laughed as the sacred clowns pointed out the workers

who were knocked down by the swift current as they tried to force their way.

At last three strong men, working together, picked up one bundle of limbs and waded slowly into the river. They stopped about fifteen feet from the shore. While the current pushed at their waists, they carefully spread the limbs apart and pushed the three loose ends deep into the soft mud and sand of the river bottom. With the ends so separated, the tops, tied tightly with the yucca fibers, formed a fork above the water.

In the same manner, other groups of Indians anchored the remaining cottonwood bundles in line with the first one and about fifteen feet apart. When all the groups had driven their poles into the river bottom, the forked tops stuck up about the same height above the river. Then big logs were laid from fork to fork and were tied fast. When all the logs were in place, they would make a strong, wooden trail from one bank to the other.

When the big fish, swimming upstream, came to the muddy water, they stuck out their heads and, with their gills wide open, tried to get air. To make the women and children laugh, the clowns pretended to be very much frightened.



They struck at the gasping fish as though trying to drive them away.

When the sun stood straight overhead, the clowns stopped making fun. The Water Spirit gave the command, and the men slowly waded out from the water to sit and rest in the warm sunshine. The children hurried to bring wood so that the women could prepare the midday meal. The Indians did not go back to the pueblo; they were going to have a picnic meal near the river. After building a good fire, the women put strips of meat on long sticks and held them over the fire to roast. The women had also brought plenty of bread with them in their baskets. When the men were rested, everyone—men, women, and children—ate bread and roasted meat. While they were eating, they had much fun talking and laughing.

After the men had eaten, the Water Spirit called them back to the river. The work was hard, and soon all were very tired. The sacred clowns were finding it hard to make the tired workers laugh. When the funmakers could think of nothing else to do, they had a water fight. They splashed water on one another and rolled



on the bank until they were covered with mud. No matter how tired these Delight Makers were, they could not stop, for it was their duty to make the workers enjoy themselves.

Slowly but steadily the work went on. At last the new footbridge stretched from bank to bank. When the last log was tied in place, the Water Spirit climbed from the chilly water. He pretended to be frightened by the long shadows which Father Sun was throwing behind him. He called to everybody to hurry from the water. The weary men did not need a second bidding.

Wading as fast as they could against the current, the men climbed the slippery bank. Once on shore, they sat in the rays of the late afternoon sun to dry before they put on their leggings and moccasins. But the tired Indians did not wait long, for they were eager to go to their homes, where they could rest until the evening meal was ready.

When Star and his three friends brought the burros in from the feeding grounds, everyone had left the riverbank. Putting their well-fed little beasts into the corral, the boys hurried home to hear what had happened at the pueblo.



*The Bridge of the Koshares*

After the evening meal was over, Star and White Cloud talked about the new bridge which stood in the moonlight. White Cloud told her brother exactly how the bridge had been built. They both laughed at the jokes of the sacred clowns who had made the hard work so much easier. Star hoped that he could sometime take the part of the make-believe Water Spirit of the Koshare Society.

When he crawled into his soft bed of skins that night, Star took his bow and arrow with him. He knew that the next day his father was going to take the family with him on a long hunting trip into the wilderness. And Star wanted to be ready to meet the Wilderness People. He could hardly sleep as he thought of the many things he would see and hear in the land beyond the buttes (būts).

## THE WILDERNESS TRAIL

Morning Star was in the eastern sky when Big Eagle called his son the next morning. In his hand Star held his new willow arrows and his strong bow. By the flickering light from the fireplace, he watched White Cloud and his mother prepare the early morning meal.

As soon as it was ready, the family sat on the floor in front of the fire to eat. Star willingly ate all the boiled corn meal which his mother gave him. He knew that his father would not stop to make camp until he had found a good place to feed and water the animals.

After he had eaten, Star ran off to the corral for the horse and the burros. Singing Leaves and White Cloud packed bread and meat for the journey. When Star brought the sleepy animals to the plaza, Singing Leaves, with Little Bird on her back, seated herself on a burro. Big Eagle mounted his faithful horse, and White Cloud and Star climbed upon their little burros. It was Star's duty to herd the three pack burros carrying



the things that the family would need on the journey.

As the group rode to the pueblo gate, most of the other Indians of the village were gathered there. Many had gifts of dried meat, squash, and bread for the travelers. The old Medicine Man brought Little Bird a beautiful new robe made from the yellow skin of a mountain lion. The skin was given to keep Little Bird warm on his first hunting trip. As everybody said good-bye, the family, after thanking the friendly givers, rode slowly through the gate toward the river ford.

When the burros and the horse had waded safely through the rushing water, Big Eagle led the party straight across the sandy plain toward one of the deep canyons ahead. Star asked his father why he had picked this trail. He told Star that not far from the head of the canyon toward which they were headed was a clear, flowing spring, which was always ready to give a drink to man or beast.

As the little family left the grasslands and started into the canyon, the trail became rough. At times it seemed to Star and White Cloud that the steep sides of the canyon reached long, rocky

arms which touched the patch of beautiful blue sky far above. There the sun was shining brightly; but below, the Indians were riding in dark and gloom.

They had not gone far when Big Eagle stopped and dismounted. Leading Star from the trail, he showed him a game trap, placed where several wild-animal trails crossed one another. Big Eagle told his son that game driven from the top of the mesa or through the deep canyons could not help falling into the trap.

The trap was a bottle-shaped hole about twelve feet deep, cut into the solid rock. The opening at the top, through which the animals fell, was narrower than the bottom of the hole. Star examined the hole carefully, for he had never before seen this kind of trap. His father pointed out several more as the family rode on up the canyon.

When they came to the end of the trail and rode out of the canyon into the sunshine, the two children shouted for joy. Now they were on top of a high mesa and could see far, far into the distance. Far out on the plains Star and White Cloud could see cloud shadows dancing

and playing on the ground. Farther away the children saw a heavy shower of rain. Star said he thought that the Cloud People were visiting another pueblo that had prayed for rain. But White Cloud thought that the Rain Makers had come out of their cloud homes only to play with Mother Earth.

The children had to hurry their burros to catch up with Big Eagle, who was now leading the way into a narrow, sandy arroyo (ă-roï'ō). This was an old, dry river bed. Although it was not deep, its steep, rocky sides made the children feel that they were shut in. They were glad when their burros followed the leader up the steep bank and into the open once more.

When the sun threw the shadows directly underneath the burros, the children knew it was midday. Star and White Cloud whispered to each other. They hoped that the family would soon stop to eat. They did not let anyone else hear them. Only a baby, like Little Bird, would cry or ask for something to eat. But both children were pleased when Big Eagle jumped from his horse and said that the group would stop there.

Now the children were glad that they had



ridden through the dark canyon and the narrow arroyo. For there, in the shifting light and shade and almost hidden under the trees, was the beautiful spring from which flowed clear, cold, sparkling water.

Star quickly tied the front feet of the animals together so that they could not stray away as they grazed. Big Eagle gathered some wood and built a campfire on a rock. Before long, White Cloud and Singing Leaves had the midday meal ready.

After the Indians had eaten, they rested awhile. In a short time they were ready for the steep climb up the rugged mountain trail that lay ahead of them. Before they started, all in the family group took a deep drink, for they knew they might not find such good water again for some time. Even the animals drank longer than usual, as though they liked the fresh spring water.

Big Eagle slowly led the way up the steep trail. He knew the way was hard, and he did not want the animals to become tired too soon. When the Indians reached the top of the mountain trail, they rode into a wonderful forest of tall old pines. The ground was solidly covered with a soft carpet of pine needles. So thick was



the carpet that the muffled hoofbeats of the horse and the burros did not frighten the timid Animal People, who made this wilderness their home.

The squirrels in the trees chattered and scolded. Perhaps they were asking one another who dared to enter their woodland home. The woodpeckers tapped the trees in eager haste to get their food. They might have been afraid that these strange visitors would reach it first. Star and White Cloud heard the trees whisper softly to the wind as it passed through their branches. What were they saying? The children did not know. Perhaps the Tree People were talking to Mother Earth. She sent them the water that they needed for their heavy roots and trunks. So tall were the trees that the children wondered whether the treetops knew that there were Man People under them.

Star and White Cloud were sorry to reach the end of the cool trail through the thick pine forest. When they came out, they were pleased to see a great green valley stretching far out below them. Big Eagle told the children that they were on top of a big butte. As they started down the steep, rocky trail, Star saw the late sunshine play-

ing the touch game with a little stream which flowed over the rocks and beneath the trees.

When they reached the bottom of the trail on the edge of the wide, green valley, Big Eagle said, "This is the favorite hunting ground of our people. It was the hunting ground of the Long-Ago People, too. If you watch closely, you will see many Wilderness People. We shall stay here to find skins for moccasins and clothing. We shall hunt deer."

Star knew that the summer deerskin was best for making clothes. During the warm moons the hair was thinner than it was during the cold moons and did not grow through the skin. He knew that was why the summer hair was easier to scrape off than the heavy winter hair.

While he helped make camp, Star looked eagerly around him. His father had camped beside the stream that had been playing the touch game with the sun. At their feet the little stream made a sharp bend as it entered a deep canyon and rushed madly down the valley. In the distance dense rows of mighty pines swept the sky. Among the green branches of the pines Star's sharp eyes saw the white trunks and the



*The First Camp*



light-colored leaves of the quaking aspen trees. In every direction from the camp were thick forests and rocky hills.

After Star helped unpack the animals, he led them down to the stream for water. While the boy was watching them drink, Big Eagle started a quick fire, and Singing Leaves prepared the food. White Cloud took a pottery jar to a spring which her father had pointed out to her. There she filled it with crystal-clear water. Soon the little family from the pueblo ate its peaceful evening meal.

After White Cloud helped her mother make the beds with soft robes, all in the family were ready to sleep. Off in the distance, from the rim of the valley, Star heard a sharp yelping and barking. It was a coyote (kī'ōt), objecting to the camp. The voice rolled across the valley and came echoing back. As the boy listened to the barking and howling, he believed that the animal had many of his brothers with him. Star tried very hard not to be afraid. He could not sleep, but rolled about on his bed.

Big Eagle heard the boy moving and said, "Go to sleep, my son. There is only one coyote.



He will not hurt you. He is only telling his own people that an enemy has arrived."

Although he was no longer afraid, Star lay wide awake, listening to the many voices of the Wilderness People. He did not know what some of the strange noises meant. He tried to stay awake so that he could hear more of them. But at last, tired from his hard travel, he slowly drifted into a deep, restful sleep.

## THE LAND OF THE LONG-AGO PEOPLE

Father Sun was already laughing at Star and White Cloud when their mother awakened them. They jumped eagerly to their feet, for Big Eagle told them that they were all going to swim in a wonderful warm spring.

The father led his family to the big spring, which bubbled from a bowl-shaped hole in Mother Earth. The children had never seen such a thing before. They were surprised when they waded into the pool and found how warm the water was.

“What makes the water warm?” asked Star as he swam about like a fish, enjoying himself in the sparkling pool.

“It is one of the mysteries of the Underneath People,” his father answered him. “Perhaps Tall Oak will tell you why the water is warm. It has been this way ever since our people first came to this valley.”

Star and White Cloud were delighted. They did not want to leave their warm bath. But they followed their mother when she carried Little

Bird back to camp. Their swim had made them so hungry that they were glad to eat.

After he had eaten, Star brought animals for all to ride. When the family mounted, Big Eagle led the way into a near-by canyon.

On the way he said, "We shall see many other strange things when we visit the homes of the Long-Ago People. First we shall go into the land of pointed rocks and boiling water."

The little family soon reached the canyon where stood many tall, tent-shaped rocks. On the tops of some of them rested great boulders, which Star thought might fall at any moment. But Big Eagle told him that the tent rocks had been the resting places of these boulders for many, many summers.

Then Big Eagle showed his family the caves cut into the walls of the rocky canyon. He told the wondering children that most of the caves had been made by Red People long before anyone living could remember. Other caves had been cut by the Wind and the Water People. In most of the caves the Long-Ago People had lived at one time.

Star and White Cloud stayed behind their

father. They thought they were entering a Spirit Land. They were almost afraid, for they believed that the great white rocks might be the homes of giants. Below they could hear the roar of water as it fought with the great boulders standing in its way. But the mighty warrior rocks stood firm against the force of the water spirits. Star heard the water spirits scolding loudly as they hurried ahead to disappear into the unknown.

In a near-by canyon the children saw steam and hot water rushing from the heart of a mountain that was not strong enough to hold the water back. When Star saw the steam, he told White Cloud that the Underneath People must have a big fire burning down in Mother Earth.

"This is the canyon of boiling water," Big Eagle told the wondering children.

As the family stood watching this mystery, Big Eagle made a prayer. Then he led the group back to their camp beside the cool stream. Even Star and White Cloud did not talk on the way; they had seen one of the wonders of the Underneath People.

While he was eating his midday meal, Big



Eagle pointed to a cliff not far off. "There are more homes of our Long-Ago People," he said. "When we have eaten, we shall visit them. Then tomorrow, my son, you and I must hunt for the skins that your mother needs."

Soon Star brought in four of the rested burros. The other animals he hobbled and left to feed. The family mounted the sturdy little burros and started up the steep trail. When they reached the rocky cliffs that protected the ancient homes, they left the animals to feed and rest.

As he climbed the steep trail, Star was glad that he had not lived in that Long-Ago time. He would not have liked carrying water to these homes in the cliffs. When the Indians had almost reached their goal, Big Eagle stopped. Star saw him blow some of the sacred corn meal from the palm of his left hand. The family knew that Big Eagle was offering a silent prayer to the Long-Ago People who had dug their homes in these rocks. All about him Star felt the silence and solitude of these deserted cave dwellings. He knew that now they held only the secrets of the Long-Ago past.

Following his father, Star climbed the rough



*The Home of the Long-Ago People*

steps cut into the solid rock, that led to one of the cliff dwellings. There were no doors, for the caves stood always open.

Without speaking, the family reverently entered the old cave house. The walls of the living quarters had been carefully plastered many, many times with the same kind of white clay that Singing Leaves used in her adobe home in the valley. Over the large fireplace Star found traces of smoke. White Cloud pointed out little niches, cut in the solid walls, which had at one time probably held trinkets and sacred corn meal.

Farther back, in the unfinished, rocky part of the cave, pictures of men and beasts had been cut by some artist of the past. But the only remains of these Long-Ago People that the children could find were some broken pieces of pottery and a few arrowheads. These the children carefully saved to show to their friends at the pueblo.

"Did the Wind and the Water People help build these caves, too?" Star asked his father.

"No," Big Eagle told his family. "These were slowly dug out with stone knives and sharpened sticks, the only tools that the Long-Ago



People had. Many, many snows came before the caves were finished."

"Why did the Long-Ago People leave their cliff homes?" White Cloud wanted to know.

"Yes," put in Star, "a warrior could easily keep watch over the valley here just as the warriors did at the homes on the mesa. He could always see his enemies when they came."

Big Eagle looked very thoughtful. "Perhaps these people needed water closer to their homes, as the people on the mesa did. Nobody knows. Even Tall Oak can tell you little about these Long-Ago People, my children."

Leaving the ancient homes in the silent glow of the late sun, the little family started back to camp. Star and White Cloud knew that they would never forget the cliff homes of the Long-Ago People. The children hoped that Tall Oak could tell them more when they were back in the pueblo.

When the Indians again reached camp, Star and his father went to the crystal stream to fish. Singing Leaves spread Little Bird's new puma-skin blanket on the ground in the sunshine. She gave the baby some bread and placed him on the



skin. Then the mother and White Cloud built a fire and began the evening meal.

When they saw that the baby was alone, the bold little chipmunks came from their rocky homes. They crept close to him, for they wanted the bread that he held in his little fist. Overhead the black-and-white magpies scolded Little Bird. They seemed to say that this valley was their home and that nobody else had a right to come here. Flying near the stranger, they tried to take his bread before the chipmunks got it. But brave Little Bird found a stick. Seizing it, he waved it about trying to frighten the magpies away. He worked so hard shaking his stick at the birds that he forgot about his bread, which he had dropped on the robe behind him. Suddenly a bold magpie, quickly flying down, picked up the bread and flew away with it. In vain did Little Bird shake his stick after the magpie. The baby wanted his bread; so he cried loudly.

Star and Big Eagle, coming back to camp, heard the baby's cries and ran to see what had happened. The magpies flew high into the trees, and the chipmunks ran to their homes in the rocks. Star picked up his little brother and car-



*The Magpies Taking Little Bird's Bread*

ried him to the campfire. He knew that his mother would soon have a good meal for the hungry baby.

While the family was eating beside the fire, Star's sharp eyes saw a gray shadow steal silently through the forest in the dusky evening light.

"What is that?" Star asked, pointing the animal out to his father.

"That is a wolf, my son. He is only one of the many Wilderness People," said Big Eagle.

"Will the Wilderness People not come into our camp and steal our food while we sleep?" Star continued.

"No, not while a fire is burning," Big Eagle answered. "You must help me gather much wood so that we can keep a fire near the camp all night."

Soon everyone but Star went to sleep beside the bright fire. He was thinking of the empty cliff homes, open to the bright moonbeams. He looked far across the valley. It seemed to him that he could see on the mountainside the shadowy forms of spirits dancing in the moonlight.

Suddenly the quiet was broken by a loud wail. Star moved closer to his father. The sound came again, louder and longer.

“Did you hear that?” asked Star as his father awakened to place more wood on the fire. “I think that the cry came from the homes of the Long-Ago People above us.”

“No,” Big Eagle quieted his son. “It is only the call of the puma. We may meet him on our hunting trip tomorrow. He is the War Chief of the Animal People. Although he is a mighty hunter, he will not come near us tonight. He is afraid of people. Sleep, my son. You must be well rested for the hunt in the morning.”



## THE WILDERNESS PEOPLE

Early the next morning, Star and Big Eagle hobbled their animals while White Cloud and Singing Leaves prepared the meal. The hunters did not want to take the noisy burros because the wild Animal People have sharp ears.

On their way back to camp, the father and his son jumped into the warm spring for a swim. They could not swim long, for the time they could spend in the wilderness was growing short. Soon Big Eagle and Star must go back to the pueblo to do their share of the work in the fields.

As soon as they had eaten, Star and his father started out to hunt deer. Armed only with their bows and arrows, they entered a canyon near their camp and climbed up the steep, rocky side. Big Eagle was careful of every step. But, in following his father, Star kicked a loose stone. As it rolled down the side of the canyon, Star thought the stone would never stop. What a noise it made! He knew that the noisy stone was warning all the Wilderness People.

Big Eagle stopped and raised his hand. Star stopped, too. He knew that the wild Animal People would also stop to listen. Then they would look around to see what had moved. If they saw nothing, they would sniff the air. Star knew now why his father had been careful to climb against the wind. He had not wanted the scent of the hunters to be carried to the keen noses of the Wilderness People.

The hunters waited until the stone no longer echoed below them, for they wanted the Animal People to forget about the noise. Then the Indians crept on up the mountainside. As he kept close to his father, Star was now more careful how he stepped. Suddenly Big Eagle waved his hand downward and sank to the ground. Instantly Star obeyed the signal.

For a moment all was quiet. Then Star heard a faint crack farther up the side of the canyon. Some animals were coming down the mountain. They were coming so quietly that he would never have heard them had he not been warned by his father that a herd of deer was coming.

As he waited, Star saw his companion raise the strong bow. Then the boy heard the familiar

twang of the bowstring. Quickly Big Eagle drew back another feathered arrow and let it go. As his father seldom missed, Star was sure that there would be meat and skins to carry back to camp. He hoped that the deer would not run far.

The two hunters dashed after the fleeing deer. There was no need for quiet now. The frightened animals jumped wildly over the fallen trees. Their beating hoofs and the clatter of the stones which were dislodged echoed loudly through the deep canyon. Quickly Star followed his father to the two fallen deer, which lay close together.

As the hunters stood there, Big Eagle took Star by the arm and pointed to a distant ledge. Star saw a big, tawny-colored puma lashing her tail. Her small, round ears were alert. She was watching the frightened deer running below her. As the hunters watched, she leaped to a lower ledge to follow the hurrying deer. He felt sorry for them because he knew that the puma never gave up a chase.

“Do you want a puma kitten?” Big Eagle asked his son.

Star nodded, his eyes shining. He wondered where his father would get it.



"The deer are a swift, timid people. They will lead the hungry puma far away. Her den must be on the ledge where we first saw her. Perhaps we can find her kittens."

Star was afraid that the mighty hunter would return before they reached the rocks in which she made her home. But he said nothing. He did not want his father to know that he was afraid. Together they leaped over the deep cracks until they found the den.

While Big Eagle crawled into the narrow opening, Star stood on guard outside. He hoped that the deer were taking the mother puma far away. Soon he saw his father backing from the cave. In his arms Big Eagle carried two tiny balls of spotted fur. Although the kittens' eyes were not yet open, their little, ringed tails were lashing.

Star took the baby pumas in his arms. "May I keep them?" he asked, thinking how proudly he would show them to the other boys.

"No, my son. It would not be right to take both babies. We shall leave one here for the mother to find when she returns from the hunt."

With the little spotted kitten in his arms,



Star followed his father back to the two deer. After both animals were cleaned, Big Eagle quickly skinned one of them. Cutting the meat from the bones, the father wrapped it in the skin to be carried back to camp. The other deer he hung on the limb of a tree out of the reach of the hungry Animal People.

On the way back to the camp, Star's sharp eyes caught sight of a fox in the underbrush. Another time the boy saw the shaggy side of a bear. The young hunter talked with his father about the Wilderness People.

"My son," his father told him, "you must always take good care of your baby puma. The puma is the mighty War Chief of the Wilderness and is the best helper of the hunting gods. You must make offerings to the spirit of this mighty hunter and ask him for success whenever you hunt. The bear is also the hunter's helper. But the bear helps our medicine men more than he helps our hunters."

"Do any of the other Wilderness People help the medicine man?" Star asked.

"Yes," replied Big Eagle. "The badger is a great digger. He helps the medicine man and

woman dig from Mother Earth whatever they need to cure the sick. The eagle, the snake, and the wolf also help. The medicine man always asks the animals for power to cure the sick. The Animal People are the real medicine men. Their spirits are always willing to help."

"There is much to learn about the Wilderness People," Star said, as his puma kitten snuggled down in his arms and went to sleep.

"Yes, and you should learn about them while you are a visitor in the home of these people," said Big Eagle.

He stopped on the trail and held Star back with his hand. When he looked where his father pointed, Star saw a small corral, or ring, of thorns around the partly-eaten body of a rattlesnake.

"The chaparral (chăp'ă-răl') cock, or road runner, a bird that lives on lizards and snakes, built that fence," Big Eagle explained to Star. "Tall Oak tells a story about this corral. He says that when the hungry bird finds a snake asleep in the sun, he gathers many thorns and builds a corral around the sleeping snake. Then the road runner hides beneath a near-by bush and waits. When the rattlesnake awakes, he tries to crawl through



*The War Chief of the Animal People*



the trap, but the thorns prick him. Then the snake strikes at the thorn pricks until he dies of his own poison. When the snake is dead, the road runner runs from his hiding place and eats all he wants of his game."

Star did not touch the trap. "I think the road runner is a very wise bird," he said.

It was growing late when Star and his father returned to camp. White Cloud ran to meet them. She was pleased with the new pet, which looked almost like Little Bird's robe. While Star helped his mother cut the deermeat into strips to be smoked over the fire, Big Eagle went back to get the meat which he had left in the forest.

That night soon after Star had told White Cloud all he had learned on the hunting trip, he fell asleep. He slept so soundly that he did not hear the mother puma calling to her mate. Perhaps she was telling him that one of her babies had been stolen by the Man People.

The next morning Singing Leaves arose before Father Sun. She must get her family ready for the trip home. After the meal Star rounded up the pack burros, and Big Eagle loaded them with the smoked meat and the skins.

Saying good-by to the wilderness and the Land of the Long-Ago People, the party set off on a short trail home. First the way led through a thick grove of piñon pines. There White Cloud and Star looked without success for last year's nuts. Then, after riding through a level field of grama grass, the family came down the steep cliff, out of the land of yesterday into the land of today.

Star, who was at the end of the line, almost went to sleep in the hot sun. When his burro suddenly stopped, the young Indian became wide awake. He heard the soft gobble-gobble of wild turkeys in a piñon grove, and he knew that his father was after new feathers for his arrows. While Star was waiting, he slid from his burro and picked up several pieces of yellow mineral for his mother. He knew that she would grind them to make paint to decorate her pottery.

Soon Big Eagle, carrying a fat turkey, came from the grove. The family hurried on. Even the lazy little burros did not want to stop, for they knew that they were nearing the pueblo. In a short time the black mesa behind the village came into sight. Then Star saw the smoke curling out of the pottery chimney tops.

As the group neared the river, Star asked permission to ride ahead. His little burro was also eager to reach the pueblo. Not waiting to cross at the ford, the animal ran straight toward the corral. The water was deep, and Star received a bath for which he had not planned. Singing Leaves watched closely as he crossed the river, for she was afraid that her son might get into the dangerous quicksand. But soon she saw Star and his burro dash out of the water and race toward the gate.

When Star entered the plaza, he spread the news of the successful hunt. Friends came out to welcome the rest of the travelers as they arrived at the gate. All the Indians rejoiced at the hunters' success. That night many families enjoyed fresh meat stew.



## A DAY WITH SINGING LEAVES

From the time that Father Sun came to greet the pueblo to the time that he went to rest in the west, Singing Leaves usually worked at her regular tasks. There was little time for rest. All—men, women, and children—had to work hard, but they did not object.

Like every other Pueblo Indian woman, Singing Leaves owned the house in which her family lived. She also owned almost everything in it. Except for a few trinkets and the clothing belonging to her husband, there was nothing in the house that was not hers. Even the children belonged to her and were members of her clan.

While the crops were growing, they were jointly owned by the men of the pueblo. But after the crops were harvested and stored under cover, they became the property of the women. Big Eagle owned his horse and burros, but he seldom traded or sold an animal without asking the advice of his wife.

The work outside the house was the duty of



the men and boys. But when there was extra work to be done, the Pueblo Indian women often helped the men. Whenever they were needed, the women even worked in the fields. Usually the need arose during the busy harvest season.

Singing Leaves was a good housekeeper. With a stiff broom made of tough grass stems tied tightly at one end, she swept the hard-packed dirt floor every day. In the same way, she cleaned the robes which lay on the floor and which often took the place of chairs.

There was no wooden furniture in the house. However, all along one side of the room was a seat which Singing Leaves had built of clay mixed with water. This seat was used as a chair, a table, or a bed.

Above the seat was a long pole from which usually hung a number of gaily-colored blankets, some clothing, and several long belts. At night the blankets were taken down and used as bedding. In the daytime they brightened the clean, whitewashed walls. Most of the blankets were made of wild cotton, dyed with bright colors and woven in beautiful patterns. The best ones were the work of neighboring Navaho Indians, who

were widely known for their fine weaving. Singing Leaves was very proud of her pretty blankets.

Across the room from the big clay seat was a wide adobe shelf. Standing upon it were a number of baskets, jars, and bowls of various sizes and shapes. Some were filled with food, such as corn meal, wheat, beans, nuts, fruit, and salt. One jar held bits of broken dishes, carefully saved for use in making new pottery.

Also on the shelf were the tools and materials used by Singing Leaves in her housekeeping. Here lay her amole (ä-mō'lā), or soaproot, her crushing stone for grinding corn or wheat, and her rubbing stones with which she smoothed her pottery. Here, too, she kept the headdresses, the beads, and the other ornaments worn in the religious dances.

In a special niche in the wall stood the family's choicest possession. It was a small, beautiful jar in which was kept the sacred corn meal used in the prayer offerings.

Hanging against the adobe walls were Singing Leaves' hand loom, Big Eagle's strong bow, and his big quiver filled with flint-tipped hunting arrows.

A huge fireplace built of rock and adobe took up one corner of the room. Within the fireplace was the large, flat, smooth stone upon which Singing Leaves made her wafer bread. Smaller stones, round and smooth, were there also. They were used for heating water. A day's supply of firewood was usually piled near by. Most of the food for the family was cooked in the fireplace, which was also used to heat the room during the cold moons.

In another corner, close to the overhanging shelf, stood the big family metate (mă-tä'tā), or hollow-topped grinding stone, used in crushing the wheat. It was too heavy to be easily moved. Each time after the metate was used, it was brushed clean and carefully covered.

On the floor, close to the walls, lay rolls of soft skins. These were used for seats, beds, and clothing. Near the door stood a jar of clear drinking water. Above it hung a gourd dipper, used by anybody who wanted a drink.

In the rear of the room strings of dried meat, squash, and corn hung from the log beams overhead. There, too, hung bunches of dried herbs, roots, and bark for making medicines. At one



side of the room were grasses, reeds, and yucca bark to be used in weaving.

One of the duties of the Pueblo Indian women was to grind the corn into corn meal. The grinding was done about once each moon. Three women always worked together. Singing Leaves usually worked with her two closest neighbors.

One day she called her daughter and said, "You must take care of Little Bird. This is the time set for grinding the corn."

After tying the baby on White Cloud's back, the mother filled a large basket with dried kernels of corn. Then she placed the basket on her head and took her grinding stone from the adobe shelf. In the plaza she was joined by her two neighbors, who also carried corn and grinding stones. The three women crossed the plaza to the house set aside as the village grinding room. All corn meal used in the pueblo was ground here. Corn was a sacred food, and the Indians tried never to anger the Corn Maidens, who had given them this wonderful gift.

Upon reaching the grinding room, Singing Leaves and her neighbors stopped outside the house. They tied up their long, black hair very



tightly. Then they took off their moccasins and stood them against the plaza wall. Finally the women shook and brushed their dresses until they were free from loose dust. Then they were ready to enter the sacred grinding room.

While the three women were getting ready, an old man carrying a reed flute came across the plaza. Quietly he sat down by the side of the open door and began to play his flute.

When she stepped into the room, each woman took her place beside the big metate, or grinding stone. This was a long, thick rock. In a row on its flattened top were three hollow places, now worn smooth and round. Each woman sat on the ground directly in front of one of the holes. Singing Leaves was at one end.

The first woman poured kernels of corn into the hollow before her. She broke them into pieces by crushing them with her grinding stone. She held the stone in her right hand and handled the grain with her left. As soon as she had broken the kernels, she gave them to the neighbor next to her. This woman ground them into coarse corn meal. She, in turn, gave the coarse meal to Singing Leaves, who ground it into the

flour which was to be used in making the corn bread.

As they ground, the women sang the same sacred corn songs which the Pueblo Indians had always sung. Their grinding stones kept time with the music of the flute. The grinding continued until all the corn which the three women had brought was ground. Each woman put her share of the meal into the basket which she had brought with her. Then Singing Leaves and her two helpers gave their places to another group of women.

Outside, the three neighbors put on their moccasins. Then, placing the baskets upon their heads, the women went home. All now had enough corn meal to last for many sleeps.

While Singing Leaves was grinding the corn, Big Eagle and Star were piling firewood beside one of the big adobe ovens in the plaza. The ovens looked like large, gray beehives. As Star and his father worked, they talked to the other men and boys who were carrying wood to near-by ovens.

As soon as Singing Leaves had reached home, she told her husband to light a fire in one of

the large ovens. Then she called Star and White Cloud, who were helping their father.

"You must take care of your brother, Star," the mother said. "White Cloud must help me bake the bread."

Taking the baby from the little girl, the mother tied him to Star's back. Neither Star nor Little Bird liked the change. Star wanted to play with the other boys, and he knew that it was not easy to run and jump with a baby on his back. Little Bird had learned that his brother was not so gentle as White Cloud.

The Indian babies did not like to be carried by their brothers. When the boys played, they sometimes forgot their helpless little burdens. The Indian boys spent much time practicing with their bows and arrows. After the young warriors bent over to pick up arrows they had just shot, they quickly stood up to shoot again. Often they rose so fast that they bumped the tiny heads of the babies. Then the brave little fellows could scarcely keep from crying. They knew that the boys tried to be kind to their younger brothers.

As soon as Star carried Little Bird away, Singing Leaves turned back to her breadmaking.





*Putting Bread Into the Oven*

The corn grinding and corn-bread making were done by all the women of the pueblo on certain days. Now the plaza was full of busy people waiting to grind or preparing to bake.

While the mothers mixed the corn flour and water, the little girls kept the big ovens filled with firewood. White Cloud liked doing such work much better than carrying Little Bird. She was then free to talk and play with the other little girls in the plaza.

When Singing Leaves was ready to bake the bread, White Cloud raked the hot coals from within the adobe oven. Then she carefully brushed out the inside with a little grass broom. She had to be careful, for the oven was very hot. When the oven was clean, she went into the house to help her mother carry out the small loaves.

To place the bread in the hot oven, Singing Leaves used a flat, wooden paddle with a long handle. As White Cloud handed her a loaf, her mother placed it on the paddle, which she pushed into the oven. When all the loaves were placed inside, the mother hung a wet blanket over the entire opening and tipped a large stone slab against the blanket.

While the corn bread was baking, Singing Leaves went back to the house. From the shelf she took a jar of wheat. Then she uncovered her metate and took down her smaller grinding stone. Soon she was grinding the wheat into coarse flour. She did not sing as she worked, for the Pueblo Indians had no wheat song. Wheat was not sacred to them because it had been brought by the Spaniards and not by the gods. When the women ground the wheat, they sometimes sang the sacred corn songs to make the work seem easier.

When Singing Leaves finished grinding, she mixed the new wheat flour with water to make a thin batter. This she spread on the smooth, flat bread stone in the fireplace. The stone had been heated until it was nearly red-hot. In a very short time Singing Leaves had a pile of fresh wafer cakes.

By this time the corn bread was baked. Singing Leaves took out the fresh loaves, piled them into a large basket, and carried them home. She knew that her family would be pleased with the evening meal.



## MAKING POTTERY

One day Singing Leaves decided to make several clay jars. She needed a small one for water and a large one in which to keep her corn meal. She also wanted a few extra jars to trade to the Navahos for blankets.

The mother called to White Cloud, who was playing in the plaza. "Come, my daughter," she said. "I am going to make some jars this morning. Do you want to help me?"

"Oh, yes," answered White Cloud. "The last ones that I made alone fell apart. They were not good."

"You must learn to make them right," said her mother. "I shall show you again."

The two went to get the clay for the jars. This gray clay, a special kind, had been dug some time before. The Indians usually kept a supply of it close at hand unless suitable clay could be found near their pueblos.

Singing Leaves and her daughter placed the clay in the open plaza before the porch. White

Cloud put a bowl of water beside the clay. Meanwhile, from the shelf in the house her mother took a jar filled with dustlike clay powder. White Cloud knew that the powder had been made by grinding broken pottery. In Puebloland no one ever threw away a broken dish. Instead it was crushed into fine powder and carefully saved for making new pottery. Singing Leaves set the powder within easy reach. Now she and White Cloud were ready to work.

After breaking up the lumps with her hands, the mother sifted the clay through her fingers. Then both mother and daughter picked out the sticks and pebbles. When the clay was fine and clean, Singing Leaves mixed in enough water to make a paste. At this point she asked White Cloud to pour into the mixture some of the powder made from the broken pottery.

As she slowly poured in the dust, White Cloud asked her mother, "Why do we use this old powder in making new jars? I did not mix in any dust when I made my last jars."

"Perhaps that is why yours broke," answered her mother. "This powder keeps the new jars from cracking when they are heated."

While the powder was being poured in, the mother stirred and kneaded the clay and the powder and the water until they were well mixed. Everything was now ready for shaping the new jars. Singing Leaves took enough mixed clay to form the base of her jar. Patting it and working it with her fingers, she formed a flattened cake. The bottom side of the cake she made flat and smooth. The top side she hollowed out with her hand. This made the base.

Next, between her fingers she rolled a handful of clay until it looked somewhat like a piece of rope. She carefully laid this clay rope on the top edge of the finished base and pressed the roll down firmly. Then she rolled other clay ropes and put them one on top of the other. Each layer was pressed down tightly against the one below. As she added layers, Singing Leaves smoothed out the clay and shaped the jar both inside and out. This shaping was done with her fingers, which she kept dipping into the bowl of water. After the jar was as high as she wanted it, she smoothed it with a small piece of gourd shell. When the jar was smooth, it was ready to be dried.



White Cloud looked closely while her mother made the first jar. As soon as it was finished, Singing Leaves watched her daughter make a little jar of her own. The mother patiently helped the little fingers over the hard places. She was pleased that White Cloud wanted to learn. After the little jar was completed, White Cloud molded another without help. At the same time Singing Leaves made other jars of different sizes and shapes.

When all the clay was used up, the mother said, "Now we must ask Father Sun to help us dry the jars. We must wait several sleeps before we can paint them."

Singing Leaves and White Cloud carefully carried the soft new jars up the ladder to the roof of their house. There Father Sun would dry them. Had the pottery been left on the plaza, a stray dog might have knocked it over, or one of the turkeys might have picked holes in it. White Cloud was very proud of her jars. She did not want anything to harm them.

Day after day Father Sun did his best to dry the pottery. Even the Cloud People stayed away as though they, too, wanted to help. White Cloud

could scarcely wait. Many times each day she climbed up to the roof to feel the clay. Every day she asked her mother whether the jars were ready to be painted.

One morning when Father Sun rose clear and bright, White Cloud's mother awakened her early.

"Come, my daughter," she said. "Today we shall fire our jars if they are dry enough."

White Cloud quickly rolled out of bed. She hoped that her mother would not decide that they must wait another day. The little girl was eager to paint her own two jars.

After the morning meal, Singing Leaves tied Little Bird on his father's back. It was Star's turn to herd the burros; so he could not take care of his little brother. Big Eagle often carried his little son, and Little Bird liked to ride on his father's broad back.

White Cloud and her mother climbed to the roof. Singing Leaves looked at the jars carefully. White Cloud was pleased when her mother said that all were dry.

One by one the jars were carried down the ladder and placed on the ground in front of the house. From the shelf in the house White Cloud



*Making Pottery*



brought two flat, smooth stones. These stones, which Singing Leaves had got from her grandmother, were used only for polishing pottery. With them, the two workers began to polish the jars. They rubbed and rubbed until the jars were smooth inside and out.

“Now we are ready to put on the slip,” said Singing Leaves.

While White Cloud rested, her mother carefully stirred a thin mixture of water and fine, white clay. Into this mixture the two workers dipped bits of rabbit fur and spread a thin coat of it over two of the jars. Then the jars were again polished with the stones. Working with swift, sure strokes, Singing Leaves finished her big jar before White Cloud had polished her small one.

Finally the jars were wiped dry and put aside. All the other jars were polished in the same way. Of course, White Cloud's jars were not so well done as were those of her mother. But the little girl had tried to do as she had been told.

The jars were now ready to be painted. For paint, the Indians used a thick mixture made from minerals that were found near the village.

The brush was made from dried yucca leaves cut into long, narrow strips and tied into little bundles. Now that she was ready to use the leaves, Singing Leaves chewed one end of a leaf to make a brush of it.

Pueblo Indian pottery was known for its beauty, and Singing Leaves was one of the best pottery painters in the village. Using the simple paint and brushes, the two workers painted different designs on their jars. White Cloud copied her designs from the old jars, but Singing Leaves made her own. Singing Leaves knew that each design was a sacred symbol. Some lines represented Father Sun or Mother Earth. Others were sacred to the Above People. Some reminded the Pueblo Indians of the Animal or Plant People. When the jars were painted, White Cloud thought she had never before seen such beautiful ones.

"I hope that sometime I can paint as well as you do, Mother," she said.

Her eyes shone when her mother replied, "Your painting is very good, my daughter. You are learning fast."

Now the jars must be fired. While her mother carried the jars through the plaza gate, White

Cloud went outside the pueblo to gather a pile of dry sagebrush and another one of juniper twigs. After that she brought a jar of dried manure from the corral. In the meantime Singing Leaves placed some flat stones on the ground behind the houses. Upon these stones she set the jars, bottoms up. Then she covered the jars with the sagebrush, which she lighted. When the fire was well started, she laid juniper on the burning sagebrush. Finally, to hold the heat in, she piled a thick layer of the dried manure on top.

Leaving her daughter to watch the fire, the mother went back into the plaza. She stepped into the house and took her hand loom from the wall. While Big Eagle and Little Bird watched, she tied one end of the loom to a post in front of the house. The other end she fastened tightly to the belt around her waist. Then she began to weave a beautiful red belt. Under her skillful fingers the design, which she planned as she worked, quickly began to take shape. For some time Singing Leaves wove steadily. She knew that the jars would not be fired very soon.

In the meantime White Cloud did her duty. She knew that she must keep the fire even. It



must not grow too low, nor must it grow too high. She watched it very carefully, for she wanted to spoil none of the jars.

It seemed a long, long time to her before her mother came through the plaza gate and said, "The jars are fired enough. You do not need to watch them any longer."

The little girl wanted to take her jars out of the fire so that she could show them to her friends. She picked up a stick and began to scatter the burning branches.

But her mother quickly stopped her by saying, "You must not do that, my child. You must leave the jars where they are until the red coals turn black. If the cold air touches the jars now, they will crack. They must cool with the fire."

It took a long time for the fire to die down and a still longer time for the coals to cool. But White Cloud did not move from the jars. When her young friends came outside the plaza to join her, it was easier to wait. And after Singing Leaves brought the children wafer bread to eat, it was still easier.

Father Sun sank lower and lower. When it was nearly time to prepare the evening meal,

White Cloud's mother came again to look at the coals. They were now black and cold. She carefully uncovered the jars and lifted them out. Then she and White Cloud dusted off the ashes and rubbed the jars with an old cloth. At last they were finished.

White Cloud picked up one of her jars in each hand. She looked them over for cracks. Not a crack was to be seen. Although she had molded jars before, this was the first time she had ever painted them.

When her mother went in to the plaza to prepare the meal, White Cloud went with her. She carried her jars into the house. There she placed them on the shelf, where they would be quite safe. She wished that Star would hurry home so that she could show him the beautiful jars she had made.

## THE WHEAT HARVEST

A busy time for the Pueblo Indians had come. The moon had risen when they must harvest their wheat and store it away for the coming moons. The Spaniards, the White Men from the South, had given the Indians this grain. The Red Men quickly learned that the golden grain was very good to eat. Although it was not sacred to them, they had planted it beside the sacred corn in the fields.

The Bird and the wild Animal People also had learned to like the wheat. So as soon as the heads formed on the stalks, the grain had to be guarded. This was the duty of the younger children in the pueblo. Every morning during the late summer moons the little Indians, two or three together, climbed on the backs of the patient burros and went to the fields to guard the growing grain.

While the burros fed in the grassy places near the wheat fields, the children played and shouted loudly to drive away the hungry birds



and animals. So bold were the birds that sometimes the guardians of the fields had to climb to the tops of their brush shelters and shake blankets at the flocks to drive them away.

As the days went by, the birds became bolder and bolder. It was hard to keep them from taking the grain. Later, when the corn and wheat began to ripen and grow tall, many of the Indian families prepared to live near the fields until the crops were harvested.

One day Star went to watch the men build some of the brush shelters under which the families were to live. From the limbs which had been cut and brought to the fields, the builders picked out four long, straight poles with forks on one end. These poles were pushed deep into the ground so that the forks stood seven or eight feet high. From fork to fork of the front pair and also of the rear pair, long cross logs were laid. Upon these, smaller limbs were placed side by side to form a strong roof. Finally, to protect the families from rain, thick brush was piled on top of the limbs. The shelters were then ready for use.

Many families moved from the pueblo to live

in the shelters near the fields. Everything that a family needed was carried to the fields on pack burros. As each woman unloaded her burro, she piled the supplies upon the high brush top of her shelter. Then, when she worked in the fields, she did not need to be afraid that the Animal People would steal the dried meat and other food.

Although neighboring families went to live near the wheat, Big Eagle and his family did not move from the pueblo. But every day White Cloud went to the fields to help protect the crops. On the days that he did not herd the burros, Star also went with her. So did the rest of the boys and girls in the pueblo. There was no time for fun unless the children played and watched the fields at the same time.

One evening as Star was returning to the pueblo from the fields, he saw a crier come up out of the kiva. He held his hand above his head and shouted to the people in the plaza.

"Listen!" he called. "Listen, all people! Mother Earth has been good. The Cloud People have helped us. Father Sun has been good. Our crops are ripening. Tomorrow the men and boys

will go to the fields to bring in the wheat. Hear, everybody!"

Star and his friends heard. The Indians knew that the next day would bring hard work for them all. Before the gray shadows of the evening had turned to darkness, everyone in the pueblo had gone to rest.

Very early the next morning the men pulled out the long yucca ropes with which the wheat would be tied on the backs of the burros. The workers knew the sun would soon be hot, and they wanted to do as much as they could while the day was yet cool.

As soon as he had eaten, Star joined the other boys. They went to the corral for the pack burros. Only those that were needed to bring the wheat from the fields were taken from the corral; the rest were left behind to help with the threshing in the plaza. The younger boys knew that there would be no time for play. They must bring the wheat to the pueblo so that it could be threshed and put away before the Rain People came from their cloud homes.

As the strong young men started for the wheat fields to cut the ripe grain, they sang the Pueblo



Indian harvest song. Following their older brothers, Star and the other boys rode from the pueblo on the burros.

In the plaza the older men built a threshing ring. Around a very hard spot of ground they set a large ring of upright poles. The men tied heavy ropes from one pole to another so that the burros, which were to thresh the wheat, could be kept within the ring. When the ring had been built and the threshers had swept the hard, smooth ground with brooms of stiff swamp grass, they were ready for the cut wheat.

In the fields the harvesters were already busy. As the wheat was cut by the young men, the boys gathered it into bundles. Then they tied the cut grain upon their burros and started for the threshing ring in the plaza. Once there, the boys untied the wheat and spread it evenly on the clean ground. As soon as the boys unloaded their grain, they rode off for another load.

When enough wheat had been brought from the fields, the burros that were waiting in the corral were driven into the threshing ring. Four of the older men followed these unwilling beasts into the ring and drove them around as fast as



*Threshing the Wheat*

they would go. In this way the burros tramped the grain from the straw. Other men placed themselves outside the ring to see that none of the animals broke through the ropes.

As soon as the grain was tramped from the straw, the burros were driven from the ring. Then the men raked the loose straw away with forked sticks. With their grass brooms the harvesters swept the grains of wheat into a pile in the center of the ring. This grain they put into large, woven baskets. As the baskets were filled, they were carried into the houses for the night. Because of the Animal People and the Rain Makers, the Indians did not dare leave the wheat outside.

In a short time the boys were back from the fields with another load of the cut wheat. This was threshed in the same manner as before by the unwilling burros. And so the work went on until the sun reached the west.

Star and his young friends were very tired at the end of the first day of harvesting. Their helpful little burros were also glad to rest when they were driven into the corral for food and drink. At the evening meal Star could hardly



keep his eyes open. When he lay down, he was asleep almost before his head touched his skin pillow.

The next morning when Father Sun came, he found the Indians as busy as before. The young men were already cutting the tall grain in the fields. Making trip after trip, the boys brought the cut wheat into the plaza. All day the old men drove the burros round and round within the threshing ring.

But the women and girls of the pueblo had their work to do, too. White Cloud and Singing Leaves had risen early to join the other workers. In order to clean the chaff from the wheat, the women called upon the friendly Wind People. These dancing little spirits had been spending their time teasing the red and yellow leaves of autumn. But now that they were needed, they were quite willing to leave their fun and help with the harvesting.

Singing Leaves and the other women first spread their blankets on the ground in the plaza. Then they filled their shallow baskets with the wheat that the nimble feet of the burros had separated from the straw. Holding the baskets



*Cleaning the Wheat*

as high as they could, the workers let the grain trickle slowly to the blankets.

The Wind People caught the bits of worthless chaff that fell with the grain and whirled them away. Again and again the women and girls dropped the chaff and grain from the baskets to the blankets. Again and again the Wind People blew away the chaff. At last only the clean wheat remained. Then the little Wind People, pleased to have been of help, skipped away to play with the leaves again.

The women stored the grain in big, woven baskets. When it was needed during the cold moons, the wheat would be ground into the flour from which was made the bread that the Indians liked so well.

By the time Father Sun had slipped behind the western mountains on the second day of the harvest, the tired workers had stored away all the golden grains of wheat. But, tired as they were, the Indians did not go to rest until they had made an offering of thanks to the generous gods of the harvest.



## GATHERING THE SACRED CORN

Soon the cornfields would be as empty as the wheat fields, thought Star as he played with his friends among the cornstalks. He was not sorry, for he was eager to help harvest the sacred corn.

"Father Sun is going farther away every day," he told White Cloud one evening as the two children came from the fields. "Soon we must harvest the corn. Cold moons are coming."

White Cloud laughed. "Then we shall not have to keep the birds from the fields. I can spend more time with my friends."

By this time most of the families had moved from the pueblo to the shelters near the corn. Only a few people were left in the village to protect it and to look after the burros. The people under the shelters were safe and happy. Day by day the Indians went to look at the ripening corn. They knew that the corn was now ready to be harvested. All were waiting for the crier to send them into the fields.

One evening a messenger who called the men of the council to the kiva rode among the shelters and through the plaza. While the councilmen met, the other men waited outside to hear when the corn was to be harvested. Some of them smoked as they waited.

Smoke is the symbol of the clouds; so the men blew the smoke in every direction as a prayer to the spirits. First the smokers sent puffs to the east, the north, the west, and the south. Then they sent puffs to honor the Above and the Below People.

"Tom-tom-tom!" said the big drum as the crier stood on the kiva roof. The tom-tom called its old chant to the people. "Listen! Listen!" it said.

"The corn is ripe! Tomorrow the men and boys must go to the fields," called the crier.

Star and White Cloud were fast asleep and had not heard the call. But their mother awoke them early the next morning, for there was much work for both the children to do.

The men started into the fields before the boys, who first went to the corral for their burros. The boys drove the sleepy little beasts to the

pueblo gate. There the women hung long corn bags over the backs of the animals.

As they neared the fields, the men from the pueblo sang the corn song. The singing told the people in the shelters that the harvesttime had come. All workers joined in the song as they moved into the fields and began picking the ripe, golden corn. The husks were left on the ears. As they were picked, the ears were thrown into piles.

The boys soon reached the fields to gather the picked corn. Even the little children helped toss the ears into the bags. The harvesters sang songs of thanks to Father Sun, to Mother Earth, and to the Cloud People.

When the bags were full, the boys took the corn to the plaza. The women at the pueblo gave the boys cakes to take to the men and children in the field. The hungry young burro drivers ate their share before they divided the food among the rest of the happy workers.

The women and girls had prepared the corn-cakes by building small, hot fires under the flat bread stones in the fireplaces. When the stones were hot enough, they were greased. Then, with



their fingers, the bakers spread on the stones a thin batter of corn meal and water.

The wafers were done almost as soon as the batter was spread. While they were hot, the cakes were peeled from the stones and covered with a filling of dried meat and corn meal. Then the wafers were made into tight rolls.

As soon as the boys rode off for another load of corn, the women and girls began their part of the work. First they stripped back the husks from the tops of some of the ears. Then they braided pairs of ears together so that they could be hung over a pole to dry. Some of the corn they stripped entirely free from husks and spread on the roofs to dry. As the day went on, the boys brought in more corn than the women could husk. The unhusked ears were saved for the nightly husking feasts.

For days, from sunup to sundown, the men and boys harvested the plentiful crop of corn. In the plaza the older girls, as they husked, looked for the blue ears that would bring good luck. The younger girls carried the corn to the roofs and kept the birds away. After Father Sun had dried the corn, the Indians carried it into the

storage room. There they piled it in neat tiers like firewood.

In the evenings, after the work in the fields was done and the Indians had eaten, the husking feasts began. The young, unmarried men of the pueblo went from house to house. As they husked, they sang the corn songs. In payment for their work and their songs the young men often got meat-filled corn wafers. When they were not too tired, Star and his little friends sang, too.

One night after a husking feast, Big Eagle and his family were gathered on the porch. When White Cloud and Star saw Tall Oak coming toward the group, they hoped that they would soon hear a story. So they decided to keep very wide awake.

"White Cloud found many blue ears as she husked today," Big Eagle told Tall Oak as the men talked of the cornhusking.

"Then she is honored by the Blue Corn Maiden," said the Storyteller solemnly. "The girl who finds the most blue ears will be the luckiest girl in the pueblo."

"Who is the Blue Corn Maiden?" asked White



QEW

*Harvesting Corn*



Cloud in a very low voice. Tall Oak heard her and smiled.

“She is one of the sacred Corn Maidens. They are the true friends of the Red Men,” he answered. “We must always be grateful for their gift if we want their help.

“Long ago some of the Red Men forgot to be grateful to the Corn Maidens. Many Red Men had not taken proper care of the corn. They had thrown it carelessly into the corn room without piling it neatly. Then the Yellow Corn Maiden went to her sisters. She told them how careless the Red People had been. The Yellow, the Blue, the Red, the White, the Speckled, and the Black Corn Maidens decided to go away together. As they fled, the Black Corn Maiden went last. She made the road so dark that no one could follow the sisters.

“When planting time came, the corn of the Red People who had piled it neatly came up. The grain of the Red Men who had been careless did not grow. Another year came, and the careless ones had not one kernel to plant. In order to get food, they had to work for those Indians who had been grateful for their corn. Several

winters passed, and the careless Red Men gave all they had in return for enough to eat. Then they knew that they had been wrong. They promised that they would always take care of the sacred corn. They prayed to the Corn Maidens for help.

“The kind Corn Maidens heard the prayer. Their hearts softened. The next year the maidens returned, and the crops were good. Now all the Red People pile their corn neatly in the storage rooms. They never forget to honor the Corn Maidens and to sing the sacred corn song as they grind the corn,” ended Tall Oak.

## CHILDREN'S DAY AT THE PUEBLO

Now that the fields lay bare, the children had little to do. The girls played with their little brothers and sisters in the plaza. The boys took turns driving the village burros to the feeding grounds. At other times they helped to gather wood. At this time of the year the boys did not mind these tasks. Along the trail there was always plenty of wild fruit and nuts to eat or to bring home.

In the evenings the children listened to the older people as they visited around the fireplaces and talked of the coming feasts. Eagerly the little people waited for Tall Oak, who went from house to house with his stories of the Long-Ago days. He told of the time when the Above People visited the Red People and also of the time when the Indians could talk with the Animal People.

One evening, as Big Eagle made his corn-meal offering to the setting sun, the tom-tom sounded through the quiet plaza. The messenger was calling the men of the council to the kiva.



The father stood up to join the councilmen. As Star and White Cloud watched him go, they wondered what plans would be made for the pueblo. No one in the plaza would know until the council was over.

"Perhaps they will plan a day for the children," said White Cloud. "Do you remember how we camped in the woodlands last year?"

"Yes, and what fun it was!" answered Star. "There were games and good things to eat."

After the Harvest Moon was over, twilight came swiftly to the pueblo. As the dusk deepened, Star and White Cloud sat talking with their mother about the fun of the children's day last year. Then Star's sharp eyes saw a shadowy form on the top of the kiva.

"It is the crier," he said. "Let us listen."

As the deep boom of the tom-tom died away, the clear voice of the crier reached everyone in the plaza.

"Tomorrow will be a playday for the children," he said. The children almost shouted for joy, but they did not want to miss a word.

"We must start when Father Sun comes," the crier continued. "Everyone must give the



*Big Eagle Answering the Call to the Kiva*

children a happy time. We shall camp by the river and have a rabbit hunt."

At last the children's day had come. Every year, after the crops had been harvested, the men and women of the pueblo planned to spend a happy day with the children. The older people, as well as the children, enjoyed this day. It was the only time of the year that everyone could leave the pueblo.

The next morning, when Star and White Cloud awoke, the Wind People were on the warpath. They were blowing the smoke in every direction from the chimney tops. White Cloud helped her mother pack the things that were needed at the camp. Star gathered his rabbit sticks and his bow and arrows. The Indians felt sure that the Wind People would soon tire and not spoil the day of fun.

But by the time Father Sun had awakened, the Wind People were even worse than they had been. They picked up big handfuls of sand and whirled them in the air. Soon the air was so full of fine sand that Father Sun could not be seen. When Star put his head outside the door, the naughty Wind People blew the stinging sand



into his eyes. Little piles of sand sifted through the tiny cracks of the houses and lay on the floors.

But before long the playful wind spirits dropped the sand back into the lap of Mother Earth and hurried away to tease another pueblo. Again Father Sun laughed down on the village, while Singing Leaves took her broom and swept the floor clean.

In the corral Star and the other boys found the little burros shaking sand from their shaggy coats. The boys brought the animals to the houses and helped the women pack the burros with everything that the children needed to make them happy.

The men on horses then led the way to the camp near the river. The women, girls, and small children followed on burros. The older boys and the village dogs brought up the end of the line. Star and his friends did not leave their pets in the pueblo alone. Star's little puma kitten and Hawk Boy's bear cub were not friendly to each other. White Cloud's little fawn was afraid of both the other animals.

At the river camp the children tied their pets so that they could not hurt one another. Then

the young Indians joined in the games that the men had planned. First the boys played the run-three-steps-and-stop game of shooting. After Hawk Boy had won this contest, the younger men played the touch game with the boys and led them a wild chase around the camp. While the boys ran, the girls played other games.

Later Star and Hawk Boy asked their fathers for the horses. The two friends wanted to show that they could ride horses as well as burros. As they rode to a level stretch of land along the river, all the other Indian children stopped playing to watch the race.

The boys lined up; and when Big Eagle shouted, the horses were off. The boys' sharp eyes watched for badger holes so that the horses would not stumble and fall. Nose to nose the sturdy little ponies ran, neither gaining on the other. The two friends swung around and raced back together, and again neither won. Singing Leaves gave each boy a corncake filled with stewed meat.

Father Sun was now overhead. The men lighted the fires, and the women prepared the midday feast for the children. How good the

boiled corn meal and broiled meat tasted to the hungry youngsters! They emptied the large baskets of wafer bread and wheat cakes filled with meat stew. When the children had eaten, they did not forget to feed their pets.

“Now we must cross the river and choose our hunting ground,” the War Leader said as the Indians rested after the feast.

Taking their curved throwing sticks and strong bows, the boys ran quickly down to the sand bar in the river. They took off their moccasins and leggings and waded across the water to a large, sandy space filled with sagebrush and cactus. Here the Cacique threw sacred meal to the four corners of the earth and to the Above and the Below People.

After the War Leader had made his prayer to the gods of the hunt, a smoking fire of green brush was built in the center of the open space. The thick, heavy smoke was intended to blind the rabbits. As soon as the low-hanging smoke began to spread, the men and boys walked from the fire in every direction. At a signal from the War Leader, they turned and slowly began closing in toward the fire. As the hunters came toward



the center, they beat the sagebrush with their sticks.

Hundreds of frightened rabbits were driven from their sagebrush homes and were herded toward the blinding smoke. From the near-by woodlands the crows, the magpies, and the squirrels scolded the hunters. They said that only the Thunder People should dare to fill the forest with so much noise that it frightened away the echoes. Star and his friends hunted fiercely. They aimed their rabbit sticks and shot their arrows so well that not one rabbit escaped. The boys wanted to prove that soon they, too, would be strong enough to go on the ring hunt for deer. Before long the rabbits were gathered into big piles.

By the time that Father Sun had passed over his trail, each family had packed its share of the game on the waiting burros and had gone back across the river to the pueblo. Only the old women and the little girls rode home that night. The little boys helped the men herd the pack animals into the village.

After Star and White Cloud had eaten, they needed only one thing more to make the day

complete. They wished that Tall Oak would come to tell them a story of the Long-Ago People. Just then the old Storyteller appeared at the door. He was on his way around the pueblo and had stopped to talk to his friends.

"Tell us a story," the children begged as he turned to go.

Tall Oak smiled. Taking a handful of salt from a small jar on a shelf near him, he said, "I shall tell you the story of Salt Old Woman. My father, Thundering Rock, told it to me."

Star and White Cloud sat very still, for this was a story they had never before heard.

"Once, long ago, our pueblo was without salt," began the old Indian. "No pueblo can live long without salt; so four brave warriors decided to ride to the faraway home of Salt Old Woman to get some of her salt body for our people. For three sleeps the warriors rode hard. They forded many rushing rivers and streams. At last they found themselves in the hot, dry sands near the home of Salt Old Woman. West of her home are beautiful hills and valleys. A high mountain covered with thick woods protects her from the wind. But Salt Old Woman herself lives on a



*The Rabbit Hunt*



big, open plain. No one ever harms her. Everyone knows that she has the magic power to give life.

“The Red Men found her, wearing her white dress and her white boots and carrying a large white shell, so soft that she could unfold it. She gave freely of her salt body when the warriors asked for salt for their people.

“As they rode away, the men did not forget to throw sacred corn meal as an offering of thanks. The warriors wanted Salt Old Woman to help them when they came again. They knew that the Red Men needed salt for many things.”

After the old Storyteller had gone, the children watched their father throw sacred corn meal into the fireplace. Then they, too, sent their thanks to Father Sun and the gods of the hunt. All had been good to the children and had filled the day with happiness and fun.

## THE DESERT TRAIL

Every pueblo had now finished harvesting its crops. It was time for the Indians to celebrate the harvest.

One morning not long after the children's day there was much activity at Star's pueblo. He and White Cloud and the other Indians had arisen while it was still twilight. All were very much excited. Today they were going to ride across the desert to enjoy the Harvest Feast of a friendly neighboring pueblo.

The children spoke in whispers. They did not want to disturb the sleeping birds, the Wind People, or the cottonwood tree in the plaza. Star and his friends hurried to the corral to wake the sleeping burros for the long journey. When the boys brought the animals to the plaza, the women, the children, and the men who did not own horses mounted the burros.

The men on horses led the way to the river. The Indians on burros followed in single file. In the dim light the old trail to the feeding grounds

seemed strange and new to Star. He was glad when Hawk Boy shouted to him.

“Look to the east, Star. There is Father Sun’s messenger, Morning Star. Father Sun will soon follow his trail to the west.”

Covered with their warm skin robes and cotton blankets, the children watched as the Cloud People slowly put on their early morning gowns. The young Indians laughed because they were sure that Father Sun would be surprised to find the Red People so far from their pueblo.

“Look,” Hawk Boy said to Star as the boys rode together. “Many people are coming out of that canyon behind us. Who are they?”

When Star called to his father, Big Eagle said, “They are our neighbors. They are going to the feast with us.”

While part of the group waited for the friendly neighbors, the children went on. Not far ahead, in a coulee, they found a plum tree which they quickly stripped of its ripe fruit. Soon the people of both pueblos were riding together toward the desert, over which they must pass to the feast.

This desert was a lonesome, sandy stretch with only sagebrush and cactus growing upon it.



Only lizards, rabbits, and snakes made their homes here, for there was no water. The Cloud People did not often send the Rain Makers to this lonely land of sand and sun. When they did come, the thirsty sand drank up the water as fast as it fell.

Star and his young friends rode behind the other Indians and looked for lizards. These swift little sagebrush people were hard to see, for they could quickly change their color to that of the sand and rocks.

Star looked about him through the trembling heat waves. Suddenly he shouted in surprise. To his right he saw a big lake surrounded with green trees. He pointed it out to his companions.

Hawk Boy stopped his burro. "Last year we did not pass a lake," he said. "We must find out whether the men have lost the trail."

The two friends kicked their heels into the sides of their donkeys. In a short time they caught up with the main party.

"Do you see the lake, Father?" Star said. "Hawk Boy and I wish to water our burros."

Big Eagle shook his head as the other men laughed. "No, my son. That is only a ghost

lake," he said. "It leads many travelers from the trail. It promises to give them a drink. It moves ahead of the wanderers and takes them far into the desert. Sometimes the thirsty ones follow the ghost lake into the Underneath Land. Sometimes the ghost lake disappears. Then the travelers know that it is not real."

The boys were glad that they had asked about the lake before they had ridden toward it. They watched it grow fainter and fainter until at last it disappeared.

One of the young men rode a proud young brown horse. As the boys again fell behind, they watched this animal push the other horses from the trail. He was like a naughty child who wants to be noticed. As his rider did not punish the young horse, one of the older horses thought that he would teach the proud youngster a lesson by giving him a sharp bite.

The young horse did not like the lesson. Before his rider could jerk up the halter rope, the brown horse swung his head down between his front legs, humped up his back, and began to kick and jump. This was the excitement that the quiet trip needed. The men, kicking their

heels into their horses' sides, gave out long war whoops. They galloped around the angry horse, whose rider could hardly keep his seat. Finally the young horse quieted down and decided to learn his lesson.

Now that the fun was over, the two boys talked about the horse race that Star and Hawk Boy had run on the day for children. Both boys remembered that neither had won.

"My burro can run faster than your burro," Star said, patting the shoulder of his little animal. "The day that my burro went alone into the canyon he ran very fast down the cliff."

"That was because you were afraid and made him run," Hawk Boy broke in. "My burro also ran very fast when he drove the herd out of the canyon."

"My burro won a race last year," said Star. "Whenever I race with White Cloud, I leave her far behind."

"Your sister is a girl," Hawk Boy said. "A girl cannot make a burro run."

"You must have a race now," said one of the other boys.

Star and Hawk Boy stopped to get an even



start. But they forgot to ask the burros what they thought of the plan. Burros are faithful little beasts. They will carry heavy loads on their backs, but they always like to take their time. The boys had left the trail many times to look for rabbits and lizards, and the hot sand had burned the burros' feet. So when the boys kicked their moccasined heels into the sides of the little beasts, they paid no attention to their riders. None of the other burros were hurrying; so these two saw no need for running. The more the boys kicked, the more determined the burros were not to run. Finally the boys had to give up the race.

Suddenly one of the horses ahead jumped from the trail and tried to run. Holding the horse tightly, his rider pointed to a large rock in the sand. Coiled on top of it was a rattlesnake taking a sun bath. Most of the horses jumped when they passed the rock. But in spite of the frightened horses, the sleeping snake did not move. After quieting their animals, the men moved on. They did not harm the rattlesnake. Because he is the War Chief of the Desert, he is sacred to the Indians.



*Arriving at the Neighboring Pueblo*

Soon the party left the desert behind. The horses led the way through a piñon grove. Here the boys heard the happy call of the little cedar-birds. Beyond the piñon grove the riders reached a small hill from which they could see the pueblo they were to visit. They had yet to climb down the steep sides of a deep arroyo and follow the trail up to a level plain upon which the pueblo lay. On foot, upon burros, and upon horses other Indians from other pueblos were already climbing the steep trail from the arroyo to the village on the plain.

Ahead of their own people Star and his young companions rode down into the arroyo. There they waited because they did not know where their group would camp. The whole party climbed the last part of the trail together.

At the pueblo gate the visitors were welcomed by their friends. The children had many exciting things to tell their little friends at the pueblo. The older people, thankful for the good crops, talked about the coming dances and the feast.



## THE HARVEST FEAST

The plaza soon became a mass of moving color. In their gay feast clothes the people from many pueblos walked about greeting old friends. Sometimes they stopped to watch the Indians of this pueblo, who had been dancing since morning. Only the tame old turkeys, who wanted the plaza to themselves, minded the noise. As the groups of happy feasters walked by, these angry old birds lowered their wings and dragged them along the ground.

“Gobble! Gobble! Gobble!” they scolded. Every turkey there joined in the scolding.

Star laughed when he saw the proud turkeys. Many times he had teased stupid birds like these in his own village. Nobody ever harmed the turkeys as they walked about the plaza. They were kept to furnish feathers for ornaments used in religious ceremonies.

As Star stood listening to the happy people around him, a little friend of his, who lived in the pueblo, called to him.

“Come to see my father’s big eagles, Star,” he shouted.

Star had never before seen a live eagle except when it was flying high above the cliffs. Eagerly he followed his little comrade. Inside a cage of poles Star saw two eagles with black tips on their long, white tail feathers. There were no spots on the white part of the feathers; so Star knew that the eagles were less than two years old.

“My father caught them when they were still in their nest,” explained the boy.

“Your father will have some beautiful feathers for the dances,” said Star. “He will not have to wear turkey feathers as my father sometimes does.”

Star knew that the eagles would drop their tail feathers twice a year. Twelve large ones would fall each time. He wished that his father owned some eagles. Then he would not have to climb the high cliffs to find feathers.

Star went with his friend to the corral to see that his burro had enough to eat. There he thanked the boy for showing him the eagles. As his little host turned to go, Star pointed to the great flocks of birds flying low over the village.

“Did your pueblo invite the Bird People to the Harvest Feast, too?” Star asked.

For a moment the boys watched the many different birds picking up fallen pieces of food in the plaza. Star did not blame the Bird People, for he, too, was hungry. Saying good-by to his friend, he hurried to the house that had been set aside for his family.

He stopped for a moment to watch some of his fellow Delight Makers who were already doing tricks. Then the smell of food made him hurry on. Inside the adobe house, he found his mother boiling pounded meat in a pot over the fire. Star could hardly wait until she called her family for the midday meal.

From where he was eating, Star could see one of the Delight Makers in the plaza. His body was thickly covered with bluish-white clay. Over this clay long, black, zigzag streaks representing lightning were painted the length of his body and limbs. Around his eyes were broad, black bands. He wore a short, wild-cotton dance skirt decorated with colored thread. Over each ear his hair was drawn into great wads from which hung shredded cornhusks. Fastened to





*The Delight Makers Entertaining the People*

the top of his head was a twig of juniper. To his knees and ankles tortoise shells and the points of the hoofs of deer were bound with cornhusks. Whenever he moved, these decorations rattled.

When this first Delight Maker met a second clown, the two Koshares pretended to fight as they rolled each other on the ground. Star, who was taking care of Little Bird, sat laughing at them. He hoped that the Delight Makers would ask the Koshare members from the other pueblos to join in the dance.

As White Cloud and Singing Leaves cleared away the remains of the meal, a Delight Maker stuck his head inside the door. He said that the Koshare Society was inviting all fellow members to the dance. Leaving Little Bird with White Cloud, Star quickly took off his leggings and shirt. He did not have time to paint his body, but he did tie cornhusks to his ankles and his hair. Then he ran out to join the other Koshare boys who had been invited to dance. They were waiting outside the kiva for the older dancers to come out.

The drummers and the chanters leading the dance soon appeared. After them came an old

woman dressed in rags. A blanket was hung over her shoulders. With her arms outstretched and with a corner of the blanket in each hand, she looked as though she were flying with blanket wings. As she followed the chanters out into the plaza, she moved her arms up and down like the wings of an eagle.

Star saw his father among the men and women dancers coming in pairs from the kiva. When the double line of dancers had reached the center of the plaza, the boys, feeling like young warriors, dropped in at the end of the line. After the last dancer had joined the group, the old woman with the blanket wings left the chanters and danced back and forth alone between the swaying lines of men and women.

From the houses the women who were not dancing brought large baskets of squash, gourds, and dried meat. The women threw these symbols of the harvest between the two rows of dancers. The latter pretended that they were harvesting the crops that the gods had given. To the time of the tom-toms the dancers swayed as they picked up the food.

The clowns, who were amusing the people



and who had not joined in the dance, did not want to be left out of the harvest. They rushed in, brushed the harvesters aside, and got a share of the gifts. Then the Delight Makers came back to the side lines to tease the girls about their sweethearts. Even when the funmakers pretended to run away with the girl of his choice, no young man became angry. Everyone knew that the clowns were only being funny.

After the dancers had gone into the kiva for a rest, the women of the pueblo filled many jars with water and carried them to the edges of the roofs. The rest of the watchers also climbed the ladders to the housetops.

Soon the Koshare dancers in single file came down the steps of the kiva. As they danced around the plaza as close as they could to the houses, the women on the housetops threw the cold water down upon their warm bodies. Star shivered when the water hit him, but he did not forget to laugh. That was his duty as a Delight Maker. As soon as all the water had been thrown, he, with the other dancers, ran to a fire in the center of the plaza.

Here the Harvest Feast had been prepared.

Great bowls of meat and baskets of bread were placed before the hungry dancers and watchers. Everyone was thankful for the plentiful crops which had made such a feast possible. The Bird People, who had been flying over the pueblo all day, were thankful, too. Now they flew boldly near the fire to pick up the scraps. Even the proud old turkeys were so busy eating that they forgot to scold.

Father Sun was in the west when the feast was over. As they prepared to go home, the visitors arose and thanked their friends. Star took the cornhusks from his hair and ankles. He joined the other boys in finding the horses and burros that belonged to his group.

As the party from Star's pueblo rode from the plaza, the members were given bread and dried meat so that the children would not be hungry on the trip home. One of his friends brought Star some dried plums, which he saved to eat later. He knew that he would be hungry long before the return journey was over.

## THE NIGHT TRAIL

Star was glad when he saw that the men on horses were going to drive the burros home. That meant that he would not have to watch his little beast to make him keep up with the group.

The men drove the burros at a fast trot down the steep trail into the arroyo. The wise animals did not object, for they were afraid of the men. Besides, the donkeys were eager to get home to their corral.

By the time that the travelers reached the piñon grove, the sun had dropped behind the western mountain. Quickly the gray light faded to darkness. The moon had not yet risen. At first Star could hardly see the trail before him. But as he went on, he saw more clearly. He was pleased when Mother Moon rose over the eastern mountain to brighten the darkness.

No one spoke. Only the hoofs of the animals broke the silence as they picked their way along the trail. Star had almost fallen asleep when a weird scream made his burro jump. Star would



have fallen off if he had not thrown his arms around the little beast's neck. Some of the smaller children cried, and some of the animals broke away from the trail.

One of the men rode up from the rear. "That was the call of a wildcat," he said. "He has been hunting. Perhaps he is warning us to leave his game alone. Or perhaps he is calling his mate to the feast. But he will not come to hurt us."

Soon the scare was over, and the little band was on the trail again. It was no longer dark as the travelers started down the hill that led into the silent desert. The moonbeams shimmered over the great sandy wastes. As the Indians approached, Star's sharp eyes saw a coyote steal into the shadows of a lonely pine. The animal had been hunting on the edge of the desert.

The desert and its people were asleep. Only the shadowy sagebrush and the cactus stood on guard. With nothing but the sandy trail to watch, Star himself fell half asleep. At last the trail led away from the desert along the edge of the canyon. Here the thick, fresh-smelling pines, bending with the breeze, greeted them. Star did not like the great shadows that swayed under



*The Black Sentinel Mesa Near the Pueblo*

the trees. But now his little burro could follow the familiar homeward trail without guidance.

“Whoo-whoooo-whooooo!” came a spooky voice through the trees. Star sat up straight on his burro. When the call came again, the sleepy boy knew that an owl was calling in the woodlands. Perhaps the bird was scolding the Man People who frightened the mice which he was hunting.

Before the party reached the ford in the river, Star saw that Hawk Boy was riding beside him.

“Can you see the black sentinel mesa behind the pueblo?” his friend asked Star.

“Yes, I can,” replied Star. “We shall soon be home.”

“Do you know the story of the mesa?” Hawk Boy asked. “I once heard Tall Oak tell it.”

“Tell it to me, Hawk Boy,” said Star.

“In the very, very Long-Ago past,” Hawk Boy began, “a giant and his family lived on the mesa top. Whenever he was hungry, he came to the pueblo. Sometimes he stole the Indian children and kept them in his cave. Now only the cave is left. The water spirits helped our people kill the bad giant and his family.”



As Hawk Boy finished the story of the giant of the black mesa, the party forded the river. Star was glad when the weary group reached the pueblo. He felt safe, and he knew that a warm bed of skins was waiting for him. That night the horses and burros were driven into the corral by the young men. They knew how tired the little travelers were.

The next day was a rest day for everyone. The men gathered in the plaza to talk over the feast of the day before. Already the people of the pueblo were planning their own yearly Buffalo Dance.

Tall Oak sat in the plaza telling stories to a group of children. The young Indians liked to hear of the sacred feast days and of the brave hunters of the Long-Ago time.

The Pueblo Indians were very religious. They celebrated all important events with big feast days. Sacred ceremonies and dances, each of which had its own meaning, were carried out to honor the gods.

The planting, the harvest, and the hunt were celebrated by every pueblo. In these regular feasts, friendly neighbors were often invited to join.

Besides the regular celebrations, each pueblo held other feasts which were called for special reasons. Sometimes the feasts were held to beg favors of the gods. Such were the dances asking the help of the Rain Makers. Other feasts were planned when group work was to be done. Visitors were seldom invited to join in such special feasts.

Other kinds of special feasts were thanksgiving celebrations. If the gods had been good to a pueblo or if there was a time of rest, the council might plan a special feast day. To these feasts the friendly neighboring Indians were usually invited to share in the pueblo's good fortune.

But whether the crops had been large or small, these sincere rain and sun worshippers were always willing to honor the helpful gods. The Indians often traveled many miles over the sun-baked desert trails to take part in the thanksgiving celebrations of their neighbors.

This year the gods had been very good to Star's people. There was corn and wheat for all. No one would suffer for lack of food during the cold moons.

Only meat was needed. Soon the men of the pueblo would go on a big hunt. There were



*Tall Oak Telling Stories to the Children*



many signs of wild game. The Indians were sure the hunting gods would be as kind as the Rain Makers had been. The council was already planning the big Hunting Feast. So it was not hard for the people to be happy.

## THE HUNT

Soon after the wheat and the sacred corn had been stored away for the year, the men of the pueblo began to talk of the hunt. The Indians knew that the pueblo needed much meat for its guests at the coming feast. And, too, the women wanted meat to dry and to put away for the many meals during the winter moons. The Indians also needed skins for winter clothing.

One evening Star and his friends heard the council called to the kiva to decide on a day for the hunt. The older men and the boys waited outside the kiva until they heard the beat of the tom-tom.

“Hunters, listen!” said the crier to the waiting men. “It is the Hunting Moon. Your War Leader calls you to a ring hunt for deer. You must be ready when Father Sun comes again.”

Every boy in the pueblo longed to go with the hunters. But each young warrior knew that he must be content to listen to the tales of the men when they returned.

Star arose with Father Sun to see the hunters start. Armed with bows and arrows, the men followed the brave War Leader out the plaza gate and across the river by the ford. The men rode quickly beyond the red ridge to the wooded hunting grounds. Here the hunters dismounted and hobbled their horses so that they could graze.

In an open, grassy spot the War Leader faced his strong hunters. "This is the center of the hunting ring," he said. "Each of you must go in the direction I give you. Walk until the sun is straight above you. Then turn and drive the deer toward this place."

As soon as the leader told them where to go, small groups of hunters started out in every direction. When they returned, the men would spread out in order to cover more ground.

Quietly Big Eagle and the other men of his group slipped along among the trees. Into the hills and upon the cliffs they climbed like shadows. The hunters did not want to disturb any of the Animal People until the sun was directly overhead.

As soon as the sun reached the middle of his trail, a long war whoop echoed among the hills. Then the whole countryside broke into a great



noise. Echoes awakened which had been sleeping since the last big hunt. They played touch with the hillsides and cliffs. Rolling back and forth over the canyons, the echoes moved on and on until they lost themselves in the distance. More and more echoes followed until the quiet of the entire forest was gone.

At first the frightened Wilderness People stood very still to listen and to plan their escape. A kingbird flew wildly from a tree over Big Eagle's head. The hunter knew that the Cacique would like some of its feathers for his prayer stick, but Star's father did not let his eyes stray from the deer which had appeared ahead of him.

Leaping over fallen logs and crevices and running through icy streams, Big Eagle tracked his game. He was doing his best to drive the swift and frightened animals toward the ring below him. In a short time he lost sight of the flying herd. But their beating hoofs told him that he must take a rocky, mountain trail to head them off.

As he sprang up the narrow trail, he remembered that such trails were the favorite haunts of the warlike grizzly bear. But he did not want



*The Medicine Man of the Wilderness*

to stop now. As he leaped upon a great boulder that blocked the way, Big Eagle looked beneath him and saw a big, furry head. It was the huge Medicine Man of the Wilderness. The bear had caught his own game and was enjoying his meal. Brave as Big Eagle was, he did not dare to disturb the grizzly. As the bear stood up, the Indian dropped lightly from the boulder. He knew that he could go no farther on that trail, which he left to the master of the rocky canyon.

Down in the canyon again, Big Eagle stopped to listen. He could hear the deer running, but he could not see them. Beyond him was a growth of pine trees, thick with underbrush. Knowing that the deer could not push through it any more easily than he could, the hunter started around it. He hoped that the deer had done likewise. But some of the more frightened deer had run into the grove to hide. The kind trees gladly saved their frightened friends.

On the other side of the grove, Big Eagle joined the hunters in his group. Many fat deer and jack rabbits ran before the shouting men. There were also wild turkeys, which had been frightened from the pinon grove.



A wildcat, seeing the deer dash past, set out for his afternoon meal. But the mighty shouts sent him into a tree, where he hid among the topmost branches. Only long after the hunt was over and the woodlands were quiet did he dare to come down. High on a rocky ledge a puma, the mighty hunter of the forest, crawled into his den as the echoes rang along the cliffs. If the hunters did not bother him, the puma did not want to fight.

Perched in a tall tree an eagle, the Chief of the Air, watched the fleeing animals. Although he was not afraid, he wondered why there was so much noise. When the Indians came close, he flew off to his home among the mountaintops.

As the drive neared the center of the great circle, the Indians saw more frightened game running before them. Shouting and screaming, the hunters closed in from all sides. The men walked slowly and forced the deer and rabbits into the open ring. Here the hunters made quick work of their game. Only the wise old turkeys, which spread their wings and flew away, escaped the well-aimed arrows.

The hunters knew that the sun would soon

drop behind the western mountains. So they did not stop to talk. Working until it was too dark to see, they cleaned and cut up their game. They packed it so that it could easily be carried back to the pueblo in the morning. The splints from the hind legs of the deer were saved to be used as sewing awls. The hoofs were kept for making glue.

After their work was done, the hunters made camp for the night. Building a campfire, they broiled some of the meat for their evening meal. As they ate, Big Eagle told his companions of his meeting with the grizzly. Soon afterward most of the men fell asleep around the small fire. Several of the men took turns standing guard to watch the fresh meat and to feed the fire which would frighten away the hungry Wilderness People.

Long before Father Sun came again, the hunters were busy. They started over the trail in single file, each man leading his heavily-packed animal. The Indians were eager to get home, for they knew that the women and children in the pueblo were waiting.

Star and his friends had climbed to the top-

most roof to watch for their fathers' return. Suddenly one boy gave a joyful shout.

"The hunters are coming!" he called to the women below. "All are walking, and their horses are carrying big loads."

The boys hurried down the ladders to meet the hunters. All wanted to hear about the great hunt. When the warriors reached the plaza, everyone stopped his other work and helped to unpack the weary horses. Gladly the women took charge of the meat and the skins.

Everyone who was able to work helped to prepare the meat for the feast and for winter use. First the meat was cut into long, narrow strips. Then it was placed on the wooden meat racks to smoke and to dry. The skins were rolled and put aside. There would be no time to tan them until the feast day was over.

That evening Singing Leaves boiled in cornmeal broth a rabbit which Big Eagle had brought home from the hunt. After the family had eaten, the father took his son into the plaza. The moon had not yet risen. Only the stars shone brightly above them.

Pointing to the northern sky, Big Eagle said,



“That is the bright star that never marches, my son. It always stands still while the seven other stars pass around it in the night to tell us the time.”

“Does the star that never marches tell hunters how long it will be before Father Sun rises in the east?” asked the boy.

“Yes,” replied his father. “If you want to be a great hunter, you must learn these things while you are still a boy.”

That night as Star listened to the singing of the young men on the mesa behind the pueblo, he did not know which he wanted to do more, to sing or to hunt. Perhaps, when he was older, he could do both. But now he fell asleep to dream of the happy days to come. He knew that the children would have much fun while the pueblo was preparing for the big feast day.

## PREPARING FOR THE FEAST

Everyone in the pueblo was thinking of the Hunting Feast. Star's mother had shown interest by beginning her house cleaning. She wanted her home to be clean and freshly whitewashed for her visitors from far and near.

She brought into the plaza a bag of ice stones, or white stones, which Star had helped to gather in a near-by canyon. Sometime before, Singing Leaves had burned and crushed this mineral to a fine dust. Now she mixed it with water and made a thin paste. This she brushed upon the inner walls of her house to hide the black smoke stains. The other women also whitewashed and cleaned their houses.

When the whitewashing was finished, the women placed many loaves of corn bread to bake in the big ovens in the plaza. In their homes they made great piles of wafer bread and boiled much dried meat.

After the food was ready, some of the women took their looms from the walls and brought

them outside into the sunshine. There the mothers wove while they directed the children in their work. Singing Leaves' family watched her as she quickly finished a belt for White Cloud to wear at the feast.

While White Cloud took the loom to weave narrow strips for the hair, her mother went into the house. From the shelf she took a jar in which she kept amole roots, or the roots of the yucca plant. Crushing them with a stone hammer, the mother placed the pieces in a pottery bowl filled with water. This mixture soon made a heavy, soapy lather.

Singing Leaves carried the bowl to the plaza and called her husband. While the children watched, she washed his long, black hair in the thick suds. Star waited with fresh water for his own hair. He knew that this was a busy day for his mother, and he wanted to help as much as he could. Soon Singing Leaves washed Star's thick hair just as she had his father's. When her mother had finished with Star, White Cloud was ready with a jar of water.

Then it was Little Bird's turn. When White Cloud brought fresh water for Little Bird, he





*Singing Leaves Weaving a Belt*

started to crawl away as fast as he could. But his mother quickly caught him. Turning him on his back so that the water would not run down his face and frighten him, she wet his hair. When she rubbed the soap into his short hair, he kicked his little legs and scolded. Some of the soap had run into his eyes. But in spite of his scolding, Singing Leaves did not stop washing until he was as clean as the rest of the family. White Cloud poured a jarful of clear water over his little head to rinse away the soap. Then she took the baby while Singing Leaves washed her own hair.

As their long hair dried, many of the women went about their work in the plaza. In groups the men sat talking as Father Sun dried their heavy, black hair. White Cloud found some of her little friends in the plaza. While they cared for the babies, the little girls brought out their moccasins and leggings and cleaned them with a fine, white clay.

Father Sun did not take long to dry the Indians' long hair. So as soon as the mothers had taken the baked bread from the ovens, they prepared to comb and brush the heavy hair.

From the house Singing Leaves brought a hairbrush made of stiff grasses that had been tied very tightly together near the cut ends. The short, thick ends of the brush were used for combing the hair, and the longer ends were used for brushing it.

Singing Leaves called Big Eagle, who came and sat before her. She first combed every snarl from his long, black hair. Next she smoothed over his forehead the short, straight bangs which hung to his eyebrows. She combed the short side hair that reached only to his shoulders. From this she separated the long hair hanging down his back. The back hair she folded under to the usual length. Then she tied the back hair tightly and wrapped it round and round with one of the red bands that White Cloud had woven.

In a short while Star's straight hair was as handsome as that of his father. Then White Cloud sat patiently until she, too, was ready. After Singing Leaves had cared for her own hair, she brushed that of Little Bird. He did not seem to mind, for his mother was careful not to hurt him.

In the late afternoon, while the women still





*Brushing Big Eagle's Hair*

worked in the plaza, Star and his friends climbed to the highest roof to talk about the coming feast. Suddenly they were quiet. Beyond the river, on the trail that led to the feeding grounds, they saw a small band of men and horses coming toward the pueblo.

"Our visitors are coming before the crier has called the feast day!" Star shouted to the people below.

Quickly the War Leader and some of the older men climbed the ladders to the roofs.

"Are there any burros in the party?" the Leader asked a sharp-eyed warrior.

"No," the man answered. "I see only horses."

"Then they are not our neighbors. Our friends always have burros with them," the War Leader said.

"They are Navahos!" broke in Big Eagle as the little band rode closer.

The face of the War Leader was very stern for a moment. The Navahos were the enemies of the Pueblo Indians.

"They are not invited to the feast. Perhaps they have come to steal our corn," the War Leader said.

“If they came as enemies,” Big Eagle replied, “they would come in the night.”

“You are right, Big Eagle,” the War Leader told him. “See the blanket packs on their horses. They must be coming to trade.”

By the time the Navahos had reached the village gate, everyone was down in the plaza to meet them.

“We need corn,” the leader of the Navaho traders said when they were inside. “We have blankets to trade for corn.”

The War Leader knew that the Navahos must need corn badly or they would have waited for the Pueblo Indians to visit the Navaho country. Then the Navahos could have made better trades for their blankets. The Pueblo Indians usually needed blankets but never so badly as the Navahos needed corn. These enemies of the Pueblo Indians seldom raised enough corn in their small garden patches to keep from starving between the Harvest Moons.

The Pueblo Indian women had brought out all the jars that they could spare. The men brought big armfuls of corn. Then the Navahos silently unpacked their gay blankets.



These blankets were often made of soft wool. To get the wool, the Navahos had carefully unraveled the white shawls that had been brought by the Spanish traders. The Indians dyed the wool with their own bright colors. Then the skillful weavers wove it into blankets of beautiful design.

When the Indians were ready to trade, one of the Navahos spread a bright-colored blanket on the ground. Big Eagle knew that Singing Leaves needed such a blanket. So he picked up a painted jar and stood it on the ground beside the blanket. The Navaho did not look down. Big Eagle set a plain jar beside the painted one. The Navaho shook his head and pointed toward the corn. When Big Eagle had placed a few ears of corn beside the jars, the Navaho still shook his head.

Big Eagle knew that Singing Leaves wanted the blanket very much, but he pretended that he thought that the Navaho was asking too much for it. He whispered to Singing Leaves, who was proud of her husband's skill in trading. Big Eagle picked up a few more ears of corn and put them with the others.

But the Navaho wanted still more corn. This time Big Eagle shook his head. He had offered all that he would give for the blanket. If the Navaho wanted more, he would have to find another trader. When the Navaho saw that he could not get a single extra ear of corn, he nodded his head and made the trade. Big Eagle picked up the blanket, and the Navaho carried away his jars and corn.

Then another Navaho laid down his blanket, and another trade started. Before long a big fire had been built in the plaza. Afterwards food was offered to the visiting Indians. When the trading was over, the Navahos packed their horses with the jars and corn received for the blankets. Saying good night, they rode out of the lighted plaza into the outside darkness.

Singing Leaves proudly hung her new blanket over the pole above the clay seat. She would show it to the visitors who came to the feast the next day.

As soon as the Navahos had left, the councilmen had gone into the kiva to make final plans for the Hunting Feast, the greatest feast of the year. It would take them a long time, for there

was much to decide. The people from neighboring pueblos would come to the feast. The Buffalo Dance would be held, and prayers to the gods of the hunt would be given.

All Indians knew the time of their regular feast day. Yet each year the day must be called from the roof of the kiva. Like Star, other Indians stood waiting to hear the tom-tom announce the feast day. All were eager to hear the call, for they had been working for days to prepare for the feast.

Finally the moon closed its eyes and dropped over the western mountains to its home. Still there was no sound from the kiva. Star stole away to his bed. The plaza was empty when at last the shadowy forms left the kiva and slipped through the dim, starlit pueblo to their homes.



## THE BUFFALO DANCE

The gray dawn was stealing over the mountain when the tom-tom broke the stillness.

“Prepare for the Hunting Feast,” the crier called from the top of the kiva. “Today we must dance to the gods of the hunt. Prepare for the feast.”

Long before daybreak, every family in the pueblo was awake. Before Father Sun rose in the east, each father went to the niche in the wall and took down the bowl of sacred corn meal. With his family, he climbed to the roof of his house. There, facing the east, he blew sacred meal to the rising sun.

After the morning offering, the feast day began. Already a few of the guests from the neighboring pueblos were coming in through the plaza gate. A few warriors selected by the War Leader met these early guests and quietly brought them into the plaza.

The Buffalo Dance was about to begin. Everyone was watching the mesa top below the rising

sun. Seven dancers appeared high against the clear, morning sky. Three of them looked like shaggy buffaloes, two like swift antelope, and two like slender deer. Led by hunters, they stood like shadows against the bright sky. The people in the pueblo could hear the brave hunting song that the leaders were chanting.

As the group left the mesa and neared the pueblo, the watchers first saw the buffaloes. They wore great shaggy buffalo headdresses. Following came the deer and antelope with headdresses representing their own kind. Their bodies were covered with painted skins. In each hand, every animal spirit carried a short stick, used to represent front legs.

The hunters now led these spirits of the wilderness across the plaza and into the kiva. This was the beginning of the prayer to the gods of the hunt.

Each woman who was to dance wore a blanket dress, a red woven belt, and white deerskin boots. Down feathers sprinkled her loose hair. Three eagle feathers decorated each side of her head. In one hand she carried a gourd rattle; in the other, three eagle feathers.

The men dancers were dressed less colorfully than the women. On one side of each man's head were three tall eagle feathers; on the other, a buffalo horn. Each dancer carried his best bow and arrows in one hand. In the other, he grasped several eagle feathers.

Now it was time to care for the many guests who had been steadily arriving. The visitors were shown the houses which were to be their homes for the day.

The men and women of the pueblo who had been invited to join in the Buffalo Dance went to the kiva. Others prepared the food for the feast. The children did not forget to welcome their young friends. Star and the other boys helped the little visitors put their tired horses and burros into the corral.

When the boys heard the tom-tom, they hurried back to the plaza. Everyone who was not dancing stood watching the kiva roof. The War Leader had given the command, and the hunters would soon lead their captives out of the kiva and into the plaza again. First an old Indian carrying a tom-tom came down the adobe steps. He was closely followed by the chanters, who were singing





*The Buffalo Dance*

the sacred hunting songs. Behind the singers danced the spirits of the buffaloes, the antelope, and the deer.

Following them came the pairs of dancers. Each pair was made up of a man and a woman. When they reached the center of the plaza, the pairs separated. The men formed one line and the women another. Then the animal spirits turned and danced back and forth between the two lines as though they were trying to escape.

The men and women dancers kept time to the hunting chants. Meanwhile the children carried out a little dance of their own. White Cloud danced so gently that Little Bird, who was on her back, went to sleep. But Star and his friends tried to dance like the men. Little Bird would probably have been crying had he been on Star's back.

Hour after hour, from one end of the plaza to the other, the dancers moved. When the tired Indians stopped to rest from the prayer to the gods of the hunt, the women and children who were watching offered food. When the sun was directly overhead, the weary dancers went into the kiva. There the animal spirits took off

their sacred animal headdresses before coming out to meet the guests.

Soon both dancers and watchers sat down to the great feast that had been prepared by the women of the pueblo. Everyone ate all he wanted, while the sacred clowns entertained the group. Then all but the little boys rested. Some of the older men led the youths in games of shooting and in foot racing. Star won a prize—one of several that the women had made for the winners. When the boys came from the races, they found that some of the guests who had a long journey before them had already gone. The women of the pueblo had given the travelers presents of food to take with them on the return trip.

Soon the tom-tom sounded, calling the dancers together again. Only once during the long afternoon did the dancing Indians stop to rest. However, Star and his young friends soon stopped their dance to play games. Not until Father Sun slanted his rays to tell the people that the day was nearly over did the chanters go to the kiva.

As the last of the visitors left the plaza with their gifts of food, the boys stood near the gate to say good-by. They hoped that their little



friends would come again the next year. Hurrying back to the plaza, the boys helped the men build a great fire. Before it all the Indians stood to offer their prayer to the setting sun. When darkness settled over the pueblo, the people gathered around the bright flames to talk over the dance and the feast. Then, as the Hunting Moon rose again in the east, the Cacique called the Indians to their feet. Blowing the sacred corn meal from his left hand, he made a prayer to the Mother of the Night for his people.

Star listened to the stories of the wilderness, which the men told, until he could no longer stay awake. As he wandered sleepily home, he saw a few brave warriors in the firelight watching the Hunting Moon. Star's heart was happy. He had made new friends that day. He had played and danced.

Before he fell asleep, he made his own prayer to the spirits of the East, the West, the North, and the South. Nor did he forget the Above and the Below People. And last, but not least, he gave sincere thanks to Mother Earth and Father Sun.



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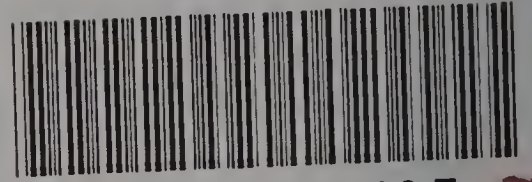
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